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ROSALIND HUBERT;

OR,

THE HILLSIDE TRAGEDY.

A STORY OF SUNSHINE AND SHADOW IN TOWN AND COUNTRY.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

CHAPTER XXIII.—CONTINUED.

* * * * * * * * *

We must go back now to the previous evening, just to find out what engagements the individual, who was to be visited by our friends from the country, had on hand. Just at dark—when the night had fairly shut in—Thomas Gondam led his horse into the very wood-path, on the east side of the hill, which he had used once before for the same purpose. He secured the animal to the same tree as before, and then walked up the hill. When he came in sight of the farm-house he crept along under the wall—so on to the barn-yard fence—and then around to the wood-shed—creeping still, like a snake—until he reached the kitchen window, where he hid among the sun-flowers. He listened attentively for an hour. He could hear but little of what was said within, but he heard something. He heard enough, at least, to assure him that Peters and Albert had returned, and that their attention was directed towards himself. And he learned, too, that they had gained no clue to the whereabouts of the missing girl. He remained there until a movement in the kitchen startled him, and then he crept away; and having regained his carriage, and got it into the road, he jumped in and drove back to the city; but instead of going direct to the stable he stopped at the pawnbroker's.

Michael was just putting up his shutters, and when he had finished his work he joined his visitor in the shop, being careful to close the door as he came in, and turn the key.

"I don't want customers coming in and bothering after I'm shut up," he said, in explanation.

"That's all right," returned Gondam. "Are you at leisure, Michael?"

"Yes—and you're just in time if it's anything private."

"Well—it is private. Are we alone?"

"Perfectly."

"Then come here and sit down."

"You sit there, and I'll mount the counter. There."

The pawnbroker suited his action to the word, while the other sat down upon the settee.

"Michael—I know I can trust you."

There was no need for Gondam to tell Michael this, for Michael knew it very well. He knew that the broker must be in a very tight place, and that he dared not trust any one else. So he nodded his head, and said,—

"Humph."

"You are sure no one is in the next room?"

"I am perfectly sure," returned the pawnbroker, complacently.

"Well—I'm in a hurry—it's late—and I'll out with my business at once. Do you know a fellow whom Barber once helped out of a scrape?"

"I know several. What kind of a scrape was it?"

"Never mind. He was called Dusty Dick."

"Oh, yes,—I know him. It was a murder scrape Gabriel helped *him* out of. He got up an *alibi*."

"Yes—I think it was. But do you know what kind of a fellow he is?"

"I know something of him."

"But of his character?"

"It's awful."

"I mean is he to be trusted in anything?"

"That depends upon what you're agoin' to trust him with. I shouldn't want to trust him in my shop long—not alone."

"But is he reckless? Is he daring?"

"In his way he is."

"And I suppose he would do a'most anything for money?"

"Anything but honest work."

"He wouldn't even mind—say—to—commit highway robbery?"

"No—nor even to commit murder, for that matter."

Gondam started, but his emotion was quickly subdued.

"Michael, could you see this man for me?"

"I suppose so."

"Could you see him—say——"

"I think I could find him to-night."

"Good! I wish you would. Just see him, and tell him to come to my office early in the morning. Tell him to be there by seven o'clock. Will you do this?"

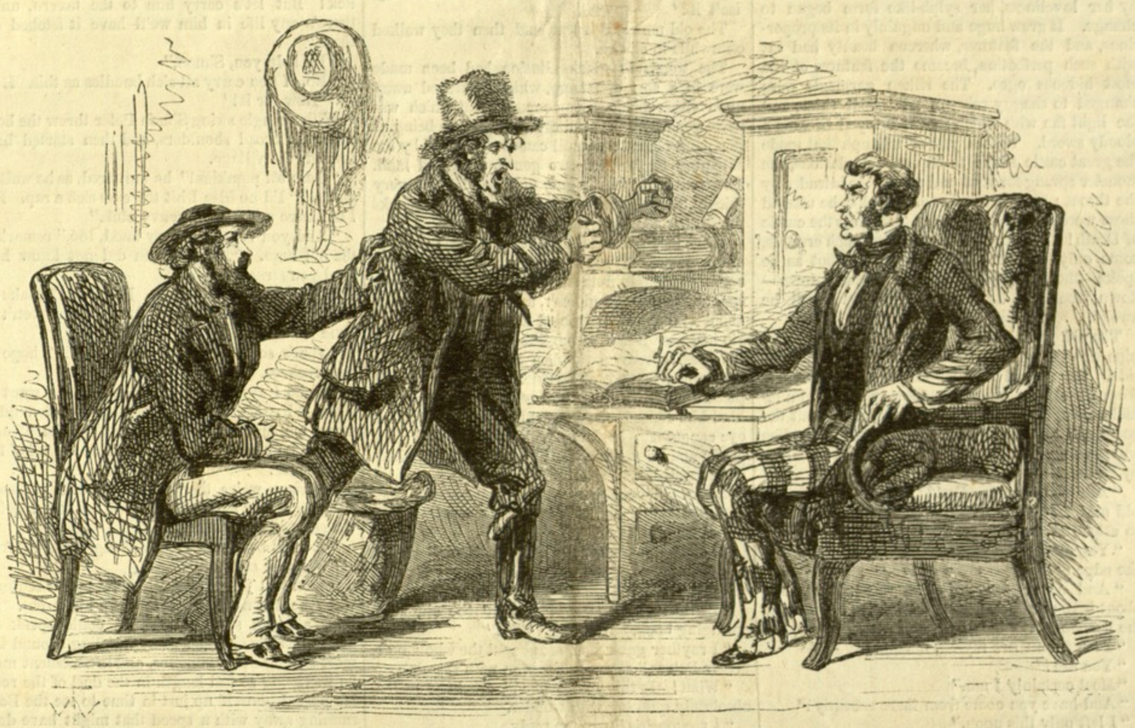
"Yes."

"Then that's all. Only tell him to keep it to himself."

"I'll tell him." And as Gondam left the shop the pawnbroker muttered to himself: "Egad, old fellow, you're playin' into my hands beautifully. I'll have a grip on them dollars o' yourn. I know you've got 'em somewhere!"

Thomas Gondam drove to the stable, and gave up the horse, and then went home. In the morning he got up and eat breakfast alone, for his wife was quite sick; and when this was done he went to his office. Precisely at seven o'clock some one rapped upon his door, and he said, "Come in."

The visitor was a young man—not over thirty at the farthest—and might have passed for a gentleman but for a certain flashy look there was in his dress and ornaments. He was slight in frame, and certainly gave no indication of being a man of whom one need to be afraid. Yet he was an interesting study for those who knew him, and especially did he enlist the attention of the police.



SIMON PETER EXPRESSES HIS EMOTIONS.

"I think you sent for me, sir," he said, taking a seat, and twirling his hat upon his thumb and forefinger. He had a very keen gray eye, and it was fixed searchingly upon the broker.

"You are——'

"I am Dusty Dick."

"Ah, yes. I did send for you. Who told you?"

"Mike Ludder."

The broker measured the fellow with his eye, and seemed to wonder whether there was stuff enough within so small a body for his purpose.

"Your name is——"

"Dusty Dick."

"But your real name?"

"That's according to circumstances," said the visitor, with a suggestive nod. "At present I have no other name. But say—if you want business, I'm your man."

Gondam had never been called upon to do *such* business with a perfect stranger before, and for a few moments he seemed at a loss how to proceed. But finally he plucked up his resolution. He had a desperate game to play, and he meant to play it.

"Well," he said, giving his chair a sort of preparatory hitch, "I do want business, and I want a trusty man to do it."

"And you'll pay him for it," suggested Dusty Dick.

"I will pay him well."

"Then I'm the man for you, sir; so there's no need of beating about the bush any more. Pay me, and I'll do your work, if it's in a shape to be done. I can crack a crib; or I can crack a skull—only show 'em to me."

"You wouldn't mind cracking a skull, then?"

"Not a bit, if I was to be benefited by it. Would you?"

"No—ah—not if I was so situated that I could do it handily. But I am known to the party, and might not be able to get around him. He already mistrusts me."

"Then so much the more need for you to keep out of his way, and pay me for doing him up," said Mr. Dusty Dick, philosophically. "Who is he? Where is the job to be done?"

"Perhaps in the city, perhaps in the country. But we'll fix that. It must be done in the——"

"Easiest and best way, and where it can be put under the quickest," finished Dusty.

"Exactly," assented the broker, who was beginning to feel more at his ease. There was something in the manner of his visitor that gave him confidence. "He stops only a few miles out from the city a part of the time. He might be taken there, or he might be dogged here. But I want you to see him first. He is—— Hark! That may be he now. I didn't expect him so early."

"There are two of 'em, sir, on the stairs."

"He was to come alone, I thought. It may be only some one——"

Before the broker could finish his sentence the door was unceremoniously opened, and in walked John Peters and Simon Peter Drake. Gondam quailed for an instant as he met the gaze of the old sailor; but he called up his impudence as the hope of ultimate triumph came to his mind, and with a forced smile, he said:

"Ah, good morning, gentlemen—happy to see you." And then turning to Dusty Dick, he added—

"If I can raise the money on that mortgage for you I will do so. You may call in again."

Mr. Dusty Dick said it was all right; and having received a meaning wink from the broker, and cast a knowing look upon the old sailor, he left the office. Simon Peter had noticed this mysterious telegraphing, and he wondered what it meant.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE PRICE OF A HUMAN LIFE!

Thomas Gondam changed color several times before a word was spoken. He tried to meet the gaze of the old sailor with a calm look, but he found that impossible. That old something in those eyes, which had so moved him before, had lost none of its startling power over him, and he quailed in spite of all his efforts to the contrary.

"Thomas Gondam," spoke Peters, after he had regarded the wretch as long as he wished, "I have not come to you on the present occasion to implore or supplicate; nor have I time to waste. I wish you to tell me where Rosalind Hubert is."

This breaking of the painful silence helped the broker to his senses, and without hesitation he replied—

"Really, sir,—you have come to the wrong place to inquire."

"I want none of that," cried Peters, sternly. "I wish you to tell me where she is. You know, sir! You know very well where she has gone!"

"Upon my soul, sir, I do not."

"You lie, sir!"

"Be a little careful how you use your tongue to me, my dear sir!" exclaimed the broker, angrily.

"Don't mind the cuss!" interposed Simon Peter, with his fists clenched upon his knees like two splitting mauls. "Put it to him jest as ye like, an' ef he dares to move a peg—dern him, let him dew it!"

"You'd like to work yourself into a scrape, would you?" said Gondam.

"Yaas. By the holy poker, I would!" retorted Simon, his whole face flashing with hate and indignation. "Yaas—I should, ef I could scrape yew out o' the world, you mean, drivellin', sneakin', nasty, sinful, infarnal, derned, cussed old reprobate, yew!"

Simon Peter had started up from his chair as he snapped out the concluding portion of his remarks, and at one moment he seemed to be upon the point of placing his hands upon the broker and tearing him; but at a motion from his companion he sat down.

"Look at me, sir," the sailor said, turning to Gondam. "Where is the girl?"

"I don't know," returned Thomas, with determination.

"You do know, sir! And now tell me! Whither did you convey her?"

"*I* didn't convey her anywhere——"

"Don't lie! I followed you."

"Just hear me out. I say I didn't convey her anywhere. I did, however, accompany them a short distance on their journey."

"*Them?* And who's *them?*"

"Rosalind and her husband, sir."

"*Husband!*" gasped the old man, with a start.

"Yes—her husband," returned Gondam, with a look of triumph.

"Mercy! You lie now!"

"In course he lies—the cussed snake!" interposed Simon.

But John Peters had so far recovered from the first severe shock, that he could reflect. Why had Rosalind refused to go with Albert? Why had she turned from him in her agony, and refused even to tell him the reason of her strange decision? The old man bowed his head, and his soul was torn by terrible fears. This, then, was the reason why Albert had returned bootless from his visit to the pawnbroker's.

"*Husband! Married!*" exclaimed Simon Peter, who had been gazing upon the broker in a thoughtful, pondering mood. "Then, by the immortal Moses, she was married agin her will, you infarnal, bloodless, condemned villain! She was married agin her will, I say—for she didn't dare to tell Albert noth'n about it! Oh! you in——"

Again Simon had started to his feet, and his huge hands were stretched towards the broker like two grappling-irons. He might have seized the rascal in earnest this time had not the old sailor interrupted him.

"Sit down, Simon," he said; and then turning to Gondam, he added, in a tone vibrating between bitterest loathing and deepest anguish,—"If Rosalind is married, then she has been forced to it—and by your means, sir!"

"I had no hand in it at all," asserted Gondam. "She was married at the pawnbroker's, and I knew nothing of it until it was all over."

"It's a cussed lie—every word of it!" growled Simon, gnashing his teeth, and working his hands as though they itched.

"At all events, I shall convince myself," added John Peters. "I will have the truth from Rosalind."

"She can tell you, without doubt," said Gondam.

"So she can, sir," retorted the old man, with his former sternness. "And I'll look to you, sir, to know where she is."

"Then you'll look in vain."

"I think not."

"But I'm sure of it."

"Thomas Gondam, you'll tell me where that girl is, or you'll suffer for your refusal!"

"How can I tell what I don't know?"

"I only ask you to tell what you do know."

"Then, sir—here you have it: She has gone West with her husband."

"How far West?"

"You've got me there, sir."

"Maountains an' broomsticks! let me shake it aout of him!" implored Simon, starting once more to his feet. "Let me!—let me!" he continued, with his fingers hooked like grappling-irons again. "I'll shake it aout of him, or I'll shake his consarn'd old lights aout!"

"Stop, Simon; I can——"

"Look ye," interrupted the broker, starting from his chair in a fit of anger, "if you know when you are well off—both of you—you'll leave me to myself and to my business. I have no more time to waste."

"Nor have I!" retorted Peters, also rising. "So let us come to the point at once. Where is Rosalind?"

"What nonsense!"

"Then let me put a word more into your ear," resumed the old man. And advancing and speaking in a tone so low that Simon could not understand, he added,—"Tell me—or *I'll put some one upon the track of him who did the* HILLSIDE TRAGEDY!"

Thomas Gondam started back, and all his assurance left him.

"Were I to whisper what I know of that poor old man who lay dead beneath the wall——"

"Stop! stop!" gasped the broker.

"Then will you tell me?"

Gondam did not answer directly. The blood rushed to his face, and he trembled violently. Peters thought this sudden emotion was occasioned by fear; and when the broker turned away to the dingy window, he supposed the villain only wished to compose himself for Simon's gaze ere he ventured to speak.

Finally Thomas Gondam returned to his seat. He was very calm, and the old cold, bloodless look was upon his face.

"If I will tell you all—if I will send you to her, will you keep your secret?"

"Do as I ask," returned Peters, and I will never whisper that——"

"Enough. Only tell me if any other human being knows of this."

"Not that I know of."

"And you will tell no one?"

"I will never speak it."

"Then—she is in the town of Tolland, among the high hills beyond Springfield."

"Are you speaking truly?"

"As truly as ever man spoke. I can take my Bible oath, if you wish."

"Never mind that. What is her husband's—or what is the name of the man with whom she is stopping?"

"Her husband's name is Lemuel Brent, and the man's name is Brent with whom they stop—he is the father of the girl's husband. He owns a good farm in Tolland, and any one there can tell you where he lives. It's only half a mile from the village."

"If you speak falsely now——"

"Good heavens, sir,—if I do, am I not at your mercy?"

"Well, well,—perhaps you are."

"But if you find my word true, you'll keep yours?"

"Most sacredly."

"Then be assured that you'll find Rosalind where I have said. Oh! in the name of all you hold sacred, sir—do not break with me! I have told you all—and told you truly!"

"You have no occasion to fear that, sir," said the old man, putting on his hat. "I bid you good morning."

"Good morning. But," added the broker, seizing him by the hand, "you will not—you cannot—break faith with me if you find her as I have said."

"No!" cried the sailor, snatching his hand away. "Come, Simon."

Peters went out—and his companion only stopped to cast one searching glance into the villain's face, and then he went out, too. Went out full of thought and fancy, and with strange projects working slowly, but effectually, in his mind. In the alley he met the man whom they had found with the broker, and he watched him till he saw him go up the stairs towards Gondam's office. He muttered something to himself, but in the midst of his cogitations his companion spoke:

"Simon, I must hire your services of Mr. King for a while."

"What for?"

"To keep an eye on Thomas Gondam."

"And are ye a-goin' aout arter Rosalind as he said?"

"Certainly."

"D'ye think he told the truth?"

"I think he did, Simon. He would not have dared to deceive me—unless, indeed, he does it by trying to get ahead of me. But I want you to watch him, and see that he does not leave the city, and if he does, I want you to follow him."

"I guess there'll be no trouble," returned Simon. "The work ain't very pressin'."

"And if it is, I can hire somebody to take your place."

"Shall ye take Albert with ye, Mr. Peters?"

"No. And, by the way, you must say nothing to him of this. I would not have him know what we have heard, until I satisfy myself by seeing Rosalind. It would only make him more miserable than he is now."

Simon Peter shook his head, but made no reply. They soon reached the place where they had left the horse, and without stopping to do any more business they rode home.

"Hi! There's that pizen adder agin!" cried Simon, as they entered the yard in front of the farm-house. He leaped from the wagon and caught up a stick; but before he could strike, the serpent had glided beneath the door-stone!

"Confound his ugly carcass! That makes more'n a dozen times that ere sarpent has dodged off in jest that fashion!"

"You must move the door-stone," said Peters.

"By the great horn spoon! I will move it, ef the cuss tempts me much more!"

"Have you found out anything?" cried Betsey, coming to the door.

"I think I have," returned the old sailor.

"O—what is it?"

"I'm going to start off, as soon as I get some dinner, to see."

"O—O—you know where she is! You do—you do!"

"Perhaps so, my dear. I hope so."

And again Simon Peter shook his head, and something like a pitying expression stole over his features, as he regarded his aged companion. But he said nothing, though, as he cast his eyes upon the place where the adder had disappeared beneath the door-stone, he muttered to himself, as he was in the habit of doing when great thoughts were working within him.

The two visitors had been gone from the broker's office but a short time, when Dusty Dick came in again.

"That's the cove," he said, taking a seat.

"Yes—the sailor," replied Gondam, stepping to the door and locking it.

"He's the one that's to be put out?"

"Yes," said the broker, resuming his seat.

"'Cause I'd rather wipe him than t'other one. Though I wouldn't mind either of 'em."

"Then you'll undertake it?"

"Of course—only show me the yellow-boys."

"I'll give you—a—say a hundred dollars, if you'll do the work."

"You mean, kill that old man?" suggested Dusty, with professional coolness.

"Yes," returned Gondam, with a slight start.

"Well—your offer is good enough as far as it goes."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Why—you shall give me a hundred dollars to kill him."

"So I said."

"Certainly—and that was as far as you went."

"And what can there be beyond that?"

"I'll tell you: Another hundred when the work's done."

"But—you are——"

"Just setting my price, that's all. We all have our own prices, you know. Now if I come to you for a deed or for land, you tell me what's to pay. If I like the price, well and good. If I don't, I can leave it. You have the same privilege, you know."

"Well, well—I shan't object. I'll pay you a hundred down, and another hundred when the work's done. But how am I to know that you have done it?"

"You must take my word for it, sir—that's all.

In this sort of business we are both bound to each other by a kind of sense in this region," said Mr. Dusty Dick, drawing his thumb and finger up under his ear, bending his head over upon one side, lifting his shoulder, and giving an awful squint, accompanied by a *clucking* sound in the throat.

"Yes—I understand," replied the broker, with a shudder, and at the same time putting out his hand as though he wouldn't have the suggestive operation repeated. "I understand. It's all right. And now let me tell you how capitally I have fixed it. I have contrived to send the old fellow off on a wild goose chase to Tolland. He will be likely to start— Well—he may start this very day. Do you know where Tolland is?"

"No."

"Do you know where Springfield is?"

"Yes—very well."

"Then it's all right. Tolland is only about five-and-twenty miles beyond. But you'll have him in sight long before that."

"I'll keep him in sight all the way if I once get on his track. But there'll be expenses here."

"I'll pay all them."

"That's honest."

"And now for the team. It won't do to trust to the stage, you know."

"I shall go on horseback. Just you furnish the dust, and put me on the track, and I'll do the rest."

"You must be ready to start at any moment."

"At any moment after I get my ballast aboard," said Dusty, placing his hands together and shaking them as though he had money between them.

Thomas Gondam went to his safe and took out a small bag, from which he counted pieces of gold. His hand trembled as he did so, and he kept his face turned on one side. Perhaps he thought how he came by that gold—thought of the hillside and of the rusty hammer. Or—he may only have been thinking of the other deed which was to come. At all events, that gold never before clinked in his ears with such a strange, startling sound as it sent forth now!

CHAPTER XXV.

WHAT THE OLD SAILOR FOUND.

It was near noon when John Peters got ready to start from the farm-house. He had no difficulty in making arrangements for the services of Simon, for Aaron King was as anxious as any one, and willing to do as much. Albert Varrondale was present, and was very desirous to accompany the old man upon his mission.

"No, no," said the sailor. "There is no need of your going. I shall be perfectly safe, for Simon will remain in the city to watch the movements of Thomas Gondam, and hang upon his track until I come back. I think I shall do better alone."

"But," urged the youth, "you have learned more than you have yet told me! What is the danger to Rosalind? Oh! is there anything new?"

"You are not very wise, Albert," returned Peters, with a slight shake of the head. "If you would ever hope, commence to cherish it now. I think I know where she is."

"Ah——"

"You are determined to doubt, then?"

"How can I help doubting Thomas Gondam?"

"I doubt him as much as you do, Albert."

"But you seem bent upon trusting him now."

"Have I not told you that I had a hold upon him which he could not break? His very life is in my hands, and he knows it. He would not dare to deceive me now."

"Let him go alone, Albert," interrupted Mr. King, who knew all the circumstances. "It will be better, I think."

"Well—so be it, then," returned the youth. And seizing Peters by the hand, he added, in earnest tones—"Bring her back with you. Tell her to come. *No* matter what has happened—I care not what misfortune may have befallen her—her heart is still mine, and it must be pure. Tell her to come, and the darkness cannot have closed about her which the light of our love shall not chase away. You will tell her this?"

"I will, my son," the old man answered, wringing Albert's hand with stronge motion. "I will tell her just as you have said. I think I shall succeed."

"God be with and help you," the youth prayed, as he turned away, and in a few moments more Peters and Simon had driven off down the hill, with other prayers following them.

Simon was left in Boston, and he promised to watch as well as he could. It was past one o'clock in the afternoon when John Peters drove out over the Mill-Dam. He had a light wagon and a powerful horse, and he went on at a rapid pace. He took the Worcester Turnpike, and at half-past seven he reached the latter place. There was a good moon, and he resolved to drive on. He stopped at Worcester long enough to get his supper and rest his horse, and then set forward. He had gone but a few miles when his attention was arrested by the tramp of a horse behind him. He turned, and in the distance he saw the dim outlines of a man on horseback.

The old man thought to himself that he was upon a strange road, and that there might be danger from robbers. There had been robberies committed, and murders done, upon dark roads late at night; and as an adventure of this kind might spoil all his plans, he made up his mind to stop at the first respectable-looking inn he came to. And then his horse began to show signs of fatigue, too; so that, on the whole, he might lose more on the morrow than he would gain that night, by keeping on.

In a few minutes after coming to this conclusion he saw a small village directly ahead, and when he reached it he found a comfortable tavern there. He had his horse put up and well cared for, and then he sat down in the bar-room and lighted his pipe. It was a warm, sultry night, and as our traveler was alone in the room, he leaned back against the wall and fell into a doze. He had driven hard—he had labored for many days—and he was worn and weary. As his head sank back, and his senses became fairly locked in slumber, he began to dream. He thought he was in a deep wood, walking along by a narrow path, where all sorts of strange flowers were opening themselves in the sullen shade. There were red flowers, and white ones, and some were yellow, and some blue; but they all had a dim, ghostly look. The red flowers were of the color of blood, and looked as though they had been dabbled in the flood from some expiring life. The white ones looked deathly, like a shroud. The yellow ones had a sulphurous hue; and the blue ones looked livid and ghastly. But presently other flowers sprang up. They were larger than the others, and were black as utter night, with petals like serpents' tongues, which seemed to twist and writhe, and dart about with malignant desire. While the dreamer was wondering at these marvelous flowers, he was startled by the sound of a human voice. He gazed quickly up, and was surprised to find himself directly beneath the walls of a great castle, the turrets of which lifted themselves to the clouds.

At one of the windows he saw a beautiful maiden, who was weeping bitterly. He asked her if he could help her, and she told him that she wished to be liberated from her prison. An ugly giant had stolen her away from her home, and was keeping her there in torture in order to force her to become his wife. And she begged of the dreamer to save her. She threw him a key, which she said would unlock the doors, and assured him that the coast was clear. "But if you have had the key, why have you not let yourself out?" asked the dreamer. "Ah—but the door will not unlock upon the inside," was the reply. And then she wept, and begged for assistance more earnestly than before.

The dreamer could not resist this appeal, so he picked up the huge key, which was of brass, and curiously contrived, and went into the deep arch. The ponderous doors swung back as he moved the bolt, and with some difficulty he found his way to the chamber where he had seen the damsel. She arose as he entered, and with a sweet smile of gratitude approached him. She was very beautiful, and her eyes shone like twin stars. Her face was like the color of the lily and the rose, and her smile was like the soft sunshine upon the morning flowers. But while he gazed upon her, enchanted by her loveliness, her sylph-like form began to change. It grew huge and ungainly in its proportions, and the features, whereon beauty had sat with such perfection, became the features of the most hideous ogre. The silken garments were changed to shaggy robes of wild boar skins, and the light fan with which she had toyed became a bloody sword. With a yell of triumph that made the great castle shake to its very foundations, the monster sprang forward and seized the intruder by the throat; and, in a voice of thunder, he uttered these words: "Know, mortal, that this is the castle of Death! All who enter here upon such errands, come only to die!" He stamped his foot as he spoke—the floor opened with a crash, and down—down went the dreamer—down—down—till he awoke.

The old man had fallen from his chair, and his pipe was broken in pieces upon the floor by his side. He started up, and was brushing the dirt from his clothes, when the door opened, and a female entered. She cast a hurried glance about the room, and then turned towards the old sailor. She was a young woman, well-dressed, and with a face by no means homely.

"Are you from the East?" she asked, after the old man had stopped brushing, and seemed ready to attend to her.

"Yes, ma'am," Peters replied, peeping under the edge of her close-fitting hood.

"And could you tell me if there is any one about here who is acquainted in Boston?" pursued the new-comer.

"I am from there myself, ma'am."

"You are?"

"Most certainly I am."

"And have you come from there recently?"

"I left only this noon."

"Then, sir, you may be of service to a suffering creature. Not far from here there is a poor girl who has been dragged away from her friends, and she wishes to communicate with them."

"A poor girl?" repeated Peters, starting. "Does she belong in Boston?"

"I think she belongs very near there, sir."

"Where?"

"Really, I couldn't say, sir. It is one of the towns just out of the city, but I forget the name."

"Is it Walden?"

"I think that is it, sir—I am sure it is."

"And what is her name?" asked the old man, now deeply interested.

"You must excuse me, sir," *the female said*, seeming to be somewhat perplexed. "She would not wish her name to be known by one whom she could not fully trust."

"How do you suppose I am to help her if I am not to be trusted?"

"But, sir, if I trust you, will you promise to help her if you can? Or, will you promise not to betray her if you cannot assist her?"

"I give you both promises, ma'am."

"Then I will tell you what I can."

"Be seated, ma'am."

"Thank you," said the woman, taking the proffered chair.

"Now go on."

"Well, sir, the case is just here: This poor girl was dragged away from her home—she will not tell me how, though I am sure it was by some one who should have been a friend to her——"

"I don't doubt it! You are right!" interrupted the old man, excitedly.

"I think I am, sir," continued the visitor, taking little heed of the interruption. "But, she was taken away, and forced into a mock marriage with a wretch by the name of Brent—I forget what his first name was."

"Lemuel—Lemuel Brent!" cried Peters.

"Do you know him, sir?"

"N-n-no—I don't know him; but I have heard of him."

"Excuse me, sir. If you are a friend of his I will proceed no further."

"Who the deuce said anything about being a friend of his?" exclaimed Peters, vehemently. "You are speaking of Rosalind Hubert! Now go on!"

"But—sir," returned the female, rising, "you know too much now. I dare not trust you. You may be the man himself, for all that I know."

"I may be what man?"

"Why, Lemuel Brent."

"Lemuel *Tounder!* Sit down here again. I never saw this Brent. I am——"

"Who, sir?"

"My name is John Peters; and I am a friend of this girl."

"Is this John Peters?" the woman said, resuming her seat, and looking into his face as though she would see if there were a lie upon it.

"It is; and now, if you would have the girl saved, tell me all you know."

The female pondered awhile, and finally she said:

"I don't know as I ought to doubt you, sir; and if I refuse to trust you, I may be doing an injury to her I would serve. You look like an honest man."

"And I am one. But don't keep me longer in suspense."

"I will not. This poor girl—— But you know her name, so I may as well speak it out. Rosalind was carried to the town of Tolland by her mock husband; and there she suffered his companionship for three days. But finally she managed to make her escape, and two nights ago she came to my house for shelter. She dared not venture further, for fear she should be overtaken and carried back."

"And is she at your house now?" asked the old man, all nervousness and excitement.

"Yes, sir."

"Will you take me to her?"

"I will if you think you can help her."

"I know I can help her."

"The gentleman is honest? He will not deceive me?"

"Stuff! Nonsense! I tell you I am her friend. I am from her old home."

"You are?"

"Yes."

"Then come along."

The female arose, as she spoke, and moved towards the door, and the old man at once followed her. The moon, almost at its full, was shining with serene luster, and John Peters stepped out upon the road with a light tread and a hopeful heart. There was a dark form at the corner of the inn, and a pair of gleaming, eager eyes peered forth from the shadow of the building; but the old man knew nothing of it. He walked away by the side of his new-found companion, anxious to reach their destination. He had not once thought of his dream since the appearance of his guide in the bar-room.

"How far off is your house?" he asked, as they came to the edge of the village.

"You see that light yonder?" replied the woman, pointing with her finger.

"Do you mean that one beyond those woods?"

"Yes."

"I see that."

"Well—that is my house. It is only a few steps beyond the trees. It is a beautiful evening, isn't it?"

The old man said it was, and then they walked on awhile in silence.

The woods to which allusion had been made were in a sort of swamp, which stretched away upon either hand to some extent, but which was narrower where the road crossed it, there being at this point almost a natural causeway caused by the sweeping together of two gentle swells of land. The trees were mostly gray birch, and grew very thickly, though many old spruces and hemlocks lifted their sombre branches over the way.

When they reached this place the old man thought of his dream. It was very dark, and dismal here, coming suddenly from such clear moonlight into a spot so shaded and gloomy, and he cast his eyes about as though he expected to see ghostly flowers. He had passed half through the wood, and was in the most gloomy part, when he noticed that his companion was not at his side. He was upon the point of turning when the rustle of garments behind him caused him to start, and as he did so his eye caught the gleam of polished steel above his head; and he saw that the hand of his guide wielded the weapon. But there was another figure beyond—a taller and more imposing one—and that figure wielded a weapon, too; for Peters saw a dark object, like a club, cleave the air, and on the next instant the woman lay motionless upon the ground. The new-comer had stricken her as the butcher fells an ox.

"In the name of mercy!" gasped the old man, springing back, "what is all this?"

"I rayther guess yeou see abaout the whole on't, Mister Peters," returned the man with the club.

"What! Is this you, Simon?" cried the sailor, absolutely quaking with wonder.

"I reckon 'tis," was the reply.

"But—what does it mean? What is it? I am—"

"You're jest a leetle mite astonished, I take it," resumed Simon Peter, as the other hesitated in his astoundment.

"I am astonished—beyond measure," said the old man, beginning to recover his senses. "What does it mean?"

"I'll tell ye jest as soon as we come into the moonlight," answered Simon. "Hold on—let me pick up this ere thing—there—now come along."

As Drake spoke, he picked up the seemingly lifeless form from the road, and bore it in his arms as though it had been a child. As soon as he reached the edge of the wood he laid his burden upon the greensward, and with one movement he tore the gown away, and then removed the hood.

"Thar!" he uttered, to his puzzled companion, "did ye ever see that ere face afore?"

John Peters gazed down upon the moonlit features. He started back, and after a moment's thought he exclaimed:

"Mercy on me! 'Tis the man we saw in Thomas Gondam's office."

"Jest so, Mister Peters."

"But, Simon—bless me, I cannot understand it. Is Gondam here?"

"No."

"Then how came *you* to be here?"

"I'll tell ye, sir, the whole story," replied Drake. "Ye see, I know'd this ere chap was a villain the moment I put my eyes on him; and I seed some signs pass atween him and Gondam that had a good deal o' meanin' to me. When we came out of Gondam's office I seed this feller a crawlin' back agin, and I know'd, jest as well as I ever know'd anything, 'at he was up to some sort o' snuff. I didn't believe the cussed snake told ye the truth. I didn't believe Rosalind was in any sich place as he pertended. I believed he only meant to git ye off to kill ye, and I rayther thought as how't this ere little chap might be the tool. I seed that you wa'n't quite so clear-headed—you'll excuse me if I talk right aout—I seed that you was rayther blinded—that your interest in this girl made ye blind to a good many things that ye ought to've looked at. An' I know'd ye so well that I know'd there wa'n't no use in tryin' to stop yer goin'. And—I shouldn't 'ave tried to stop ye, nohow—'cause there *might* 'ave been sich a thing possible as yer findin' Rosalind. But I jest made up my mind that I'd keep a pooty good watch all 'round ef there was danger for you, 'twould foller ye, so I concluded that the best way I could watch would be to foller ye, too; and I did it. I got a hoss, an' set aout. Jest t'other side of Newton Upper Falls I heer'd a hoss behind me, an' I turned off into the alders, an' let him go by. 'Twas a hoss, sure enough, an' this ere chap was on his back. Now, ses I to myself, old feller, I've got to foller *yeou*. An' I did it. I followed him to the tavern where ye stopped, an' then I seed him ride back to the little clump of trees, jest over yonder, where ye come up the hill, an' I went arter him as keerful as could be. I crept as close to him as I dared to, an' seed him hitch his hoss, an' then take a bundle from the crupper of his saddle. I seed him take aout a gownd an' put it on, an' then I seed him put on this hood. Gewhittaker! But didn't I know then jest what he was up to! I followed him back to the tavern, an' there I kept my eye on him. I peeked through the winder, an' seed him talkin' to ye. In course I know'd he meant to git ye out o' that afore he done anything, so I didn't feel under any consarn o' mind till ye followed him aout. But then I stuck pooty clost, for I wanted to ketch the scamp in the very act, so 't yeou might have a good holt on that Gondam—darn his ugly pictur! And ye see I did it, too. I crept along mitey keerful, an' kept a good look-out that he didn't git too nigh ye without bein' on hand myself."

The old man gazed into Simon's face for some time without speaking; and then he sank down upon a stone, and bowed his head upon his hands. He muttered something to himself, but Simon could not understand it—he could only see that his companion was moved by something beside fear.

CHAPTER XXVI.

TIGHTENING THE SCREW.

When the old sailor finally arose he grasped Simon by the hand, and, in earnest, ardent tones, he said:

"I cannot tell you how grateful I am. Perhaps I was foolishly blind to trust that man; but you know not the deep anxiety I feel in that poor girl's behalf. However, I know the villain now; and," he continued, "my next movement shall be one that he cannot trifle with. Bless you, my good friend, for the service you have rendered. I will not forget it. I understand it all. And now what shall we do with this fellow? I hope you have not killed him, for I wish to confront him with Thomas Gondam."

"I guess he aint dead," returned Simon, stooping down. "I hit him a pooty good lick, but I raythor think his skull aint broke."

"Has he got any life at all?" asked Peters, also stooping down.

'I don't know. Hello! yeou infarnal puppy, yeou! Can't ye hear? Aint ye got no breath in ye? Hello! I say! Look up here, yeou confounded sneak!"

But Simon shook and punched in vain. The body lay without life or motion.

"Gewhittaker! I must 'ave gin him an allfired lick! But let's carry him to the tavern, an' if there's any life in him we'll have it fetched out there."

"I'll help you, Simon."

"No. I ken carry all sich bundles as this. Hold on. Now for it!"

With a single swing Simon Peter threw the body upon his broad shoulders, and then started back towards the village.

"Gosh all pumkins!" he muttered, as he walked along. "I'd no idee I hit the cuss sich a rap. But I did have a kind of a heavy club."

"And you've got a heavy hand, too," remarked the old man. "Perhaps you did not know how hard you struck."

"I couldn't have know'd. But it don't make no odds. If he's dead, mankind in gineral won't be none the wuss off."

"That's so," rejoined Peters. "Still I hope he may recover."

"So do I, for I declare, I don't hardly want to feel that I've killed a human crittur. But 'twouldn't worry me much. Ef I was worried, I'm afeared 'twould be because 'twasn't Gondam instead o' this little sneak.

"I guess we're the only ones a-stirrin' abaout these diggins," Simon continued, as they reached the edge of the village.

"It must be near midnight," suggested Peters.

"Plaguey nigh it."

Simon had just given utterance to this sentence when he felt a sudden grip upon his throat. He gave a quick start, but ere he could speak the body upon his shoulder came whirling around in a most extraordinary manner, and in a moment more he was lying at full length in the dust of the road. He picked himself up just in time to see the Body running away with a speed that might have done credit to a racer. Simon said something which sounded very profane, and then started off with all his might. He ran as he never ran before, but the Body was too much for him. Away he went through the village—by the tavern—up the hill—reaching the little copse just in time to see the burden which he had so lately borne upon his own back, now transferred to the back of a horse, and galloping away like the wind.

With a crestfallen air he stood and gazed until he could see the horseman no more, and then he turned and wended his way back to the inn. He met John Peters at the door, and together they went into the bar-room, where a light was still burning, and the landlord nodding in his chair.

"You are out late," said the host, starting up.

"Yes. I had business with my friend. Let us have a double-bedded room, sir, and we will retire."

They were shown to a cool, comfortable chamber, and then the host bade them good-night.

"Mr. John Peters," said Simon—they were the first words he had spoken since he started on his fruitless pursuit—"did I swear to-night?"

"Swear?—You?—I'm sure I don't know."

"I guess I did, but I swan I couldn't help it. *Did* you see haow that ere thing was done?"

"The rascal must have had his senses all the time," said the old man.

"Ef he didn't, they come to him plaguey soon arter I knocked him down. He know'd enough when I was a-shakin' him there. By thunder! there's no mistake abaout that."

"He was a keen fellow, Simon."

"Drat him! O—it's too bad! Jest to think that I—Simon Peter Drake—should be so bamboozled! I don't know what to make of it!"

"But I know exactly what to make of it, Simon. If there's any bamboozling done, I think you bamboozled him. Just remember what you *did* do—not what you *didn't* do. And besides, come to look at the matter in all its bearings, I'm rather glad he's gone. It might have caused us much time and trouble had we kept him. There would have been legal forms to be gone through with, and there's no knowing how long it might have detained us. The scamp will go back to Boston at some time, and we may find him; but whether he does or not, we have hold enough upon Thomas Gondam. He is the man we want. He is the villain."

"Well, well," said Simon, with less of regret in his tone, "I s'pose it can't be helped now; but 'twas awful hard. It come kind o' tough, now, you'd better believe,"

"It must; but I assure you, Simon, I'm glad he's gone."

"Then, darn him, let him go. And naow tell me, Mr. Peters, do yeou mean to keep on?"

"To Tolland, do you mean?"

"Yes."

"That's just what I've been thinking of, Simon."

"And what have ye thought?"

"Well—I've thought that I could not rest easy to go back without first visiting that place. It may be that Gondam told me the truth, and then planned to cut me off in my pursuit. Of course I feel no assurance that I shall find Rosalind there, but I know, were I to return at once, and the dear girl should be lost, I should always blame myself for not having gone on. So I shall go, and you shall go with me."

"I rayther guess you're abaout right," returned Simon. "We'd better go; but then Rosalind ain't there. That infarnal, ugly scamp couldn't tell the truth if he should try."

So on the following morning they set off. They spent a whole day in Tolland, but could find no find no such people as they sought.

* * * * *

Thomas Gondam passed a wakeful, troubled night, and in the morning he went up to his office without his breakfast. His wife was quite sick, but he did not stop to see her. He had hired a nurse, and to her he left the invalid. At nine o'clock he went out and got some oysters, and then returned to his office. An hour after this his door was opened, and in walked Dusty Dick.

"Ha!—Back?" cried the broker, starting up. He did not take the hand of his workman; and when Dusty sat down, he took his chair again.

"The work's done, sir," said the bravo, in a hurried tone.

"Done!" echoed Gondam, with a quick shudder. "Is he dead?"

"Dead as Chelsea, sir."

"Where did you do it?"

"A little beyond Worcester."

"How?"

"A few taps on the head. You know that will kill a man as quick as anything."

"How should I know?" said the broker, with a start.

"Why—you know what a tender spot the head is."

"I—suppose it may be. But the body—how did you dispose of that?"

"Sunk it in the mud, sir—in a deep swamp."

"And nobody knows anything of it?"

"Only you and I sir."

"Ah!—There's blood on your coat!"

"Where?"

"There—on the collar—and on the shoulder!"

"Never mind," returned Dusty. "I'll wash it off when I get home. The blow was a heavy one, and the blood must have spattered some."

"You must wash it off," said the broker, uneasily. "It looks bad."

"Pooh! What's a little blood? If anybody sees it, they'll think I've had my own head rapped—that's all."

"Still blood is suspicious—dangerous—to have it on your garments. I wish you'd get rid of it as soon as you can."

"Well—let's have our settlement, and then I'll go and buy a new coat."

"I may feel assured that—that——"

"Your man is safe," finished Dusty.

"Then you want one hundred dollars."

"And twenty more on top of it, if you please."

"Ah—how so?"

"Expenses, sir."

Gondam was not in the mood for disputing such a point, so he paid over the money—in gold.

"Do you mean to stop in the city?" he asked.

"I don't know. I may and I may not. I suppose it makes no difference to you——"

"No—only—I was going to say—you don't know me, if you——"

"O—stuff!" cried Dusty Dick, slipping the gold pieces into his pocket. "Don't you suppose I understand that? D'ye take me for a flat?"

"O—no—not at all."

"Then don't be alarmed. I'll not know you, and be sure you don't know me. Good morning, sir."

And with this Dusty Dick took himself off.

And Thomas Gondam fancied he was safe. He leaned back in his chair, and muttered to himself his thoughts. He was thus engaged when his door was again opened, and Michael Ludder walked in and took a seat.

"Good morning, sir," said Michael, with his hat in his hand.

"Good morning," returned Thomas, a little nervously.

"Beautiful morning, isn't it?" pursued Michael, with a bland smile. But there was wickedness in his crooked eyes, and the corners of his mouth were drawn up till the bulb upon the end of his nose hung completely over his lip.

"It's very fair," said Gondam, who seemed shy of that smile; for the pawnbroker was not wont to smile save when he had a *customer*.

"I hope you are well, Thomas."

"I am, sir—very well."

"Ah—glad to hear it. And I hope business is good."

"Then you may continue to hope so; but mine was never more dull."

"You don't say so. Really, Thomas, I thought you were doing remarkably well."

"Then you know your mistake."

"I declare, I can hardly believe you. Business is prospering everywhere."

"And yet, I tell you, mine is not," said Gondam, quite petulantly. "I suppose people have so much money now-a-days that they can dispense with the services of the broker."

"And do you suppose everybody's got money?"

"Everybody but me."

"There *you're* mistaken," cried Ludder, with another of those smiles; "for I have none; and to prove it, I'll just inform you that I came here on purpose to borrow five hundred dollars of you."

"Five hundred dollars!" echoed Gondam. "Are you crazy?"

"Not a bit of it."

"But you must be, if you have come here with the hope of getting five hundred dollars."

"O, no,—I guess not. You can lend it to me, Thomas. I am in great need. In fact, I must have it."

"Then you'll have to go to some one who's got it, for I haven't. So there's an end to that."

"But you can raise it for me, Tom."

"No!"

"O, yes. You can raise it somewhere. Come—I'm in want."

"Zounds, man! Where's that thousand dollars I let you have?"

"I invested that; and it's where I cannot realize from it at present. So you must accommodate me in some way."

"But," said the broker, after pondering a few moments, "if I can raise this for you, what security can you give?"

"Security?" repeated Ludder, with a curious look into Gondam's face.

"Yes. If you can give good collaterals I might raise it on the street."

"But I can't do that."

"What paper can you get?"

"I want five hundred dollars' worth of Bank paper—the regular '*Will pay on demands.*' Don't you understand?"

"I suppose you can get some good name?"

"I'm afraid not."

"But you don't suppose I could raise five hundred dollars on your own note, without a backer?"

"I don't suppose anything of the kind."

"Then what do you suppose?"

"Why—I don't mean to give any note at all. I want you to let me have the money just as an accommodation."

"The deuce you do!"

"Certainly. You can do it, I know."

"Look ye, Ludder," cried the broker, considerably excited, "if you think you can fleece me any more you are much mistaken! While you had that girl in your hands you had the screw upon me; but you haven't got it now. I trusted you as a friend; but you have proved anything but that!"

"Bah!" uttered Ludder, with the utmost contempt. "You talk of trusting men from motives of friendship! Let us have no more of that. It won't go down here. You sought me for your own benefit, and I now seek *you* for *mine*. I want five hundred dollars."

"You can't have it here, my dear sir," replied Gondam, flatly.

"But I must have it here. Do you understand that?"

"And pray, sir, how will you get it?" asked

Thomas Gondam, with a smile of derision. He smiled in order that his visitor might see how perfectly independent he was.

"I shall get it from you, sir," was the quiet reply.

"Well—let's see you do it."

"Suppose you hand it over, then?"

"But I tell you, flatly, I shall not do it. You wormed a thousand dollars out of me when you knew you had a hold upon me; but you'll find it difficult to do it now."

"I can tell where the girl is."

"Fool! I care not how soon you tell. Let me inform you, just for greens, that the girl is now wholly in my power, even if her——"

"Go on, sir," said the pawnbroker, as Gondam hesitated.

"I say she could not be taken from me, even if she was here, and every living thing on earth knew it."

"Very well," added Ludder, with provoking assurance; "then let us set the girl aside as of no present use. I tell you still I must have this money. Now will you let me have it, or must I urge you further?"

"Fool!" uttered Gondam.

"MURDERER!" whispered the pawnbroker.

Thomas Gondam started in his seat, and a cadaverous hue overspread his face.

"I have no time to waste," Ludder added, as soon as he had witnessed the effects of that whispered word.

"But—do you think to fool me so?" the broker finally stammered. "What wild fancy has seized you now?"

"'Tis only the fancy that I must have the money." He arose from his seat at this point, and then added, in a dark, meaning tone—

"Tom Gondam, I know you as well as you know yourself. Give me the sum I have asked for, and no mortal ear shall ever hear your secret from me."

"But——"

"No *buts* now, if you please. I *know*. You called me a *fool*. Oho—we'll see who has been the fool! You trusted me as a *friend*, did you? Five hundred dollars will keep me so, and the world shall never know that there has been blood upon your garments!"

The broker started from his chair, and paced the floor in an agony of thought. The other watched him with a dark smile, and seemed to enjoy his perplexity.

"Ludder!" the worried man at length said, stopping and regarding his visitor with an eager look, "if I give you this will you swear to hold your tongue, and to trouble me no more?"

"I'll swear to anything you wish."

"Then remember—I have your oath."

"Yes."

Gondam sat down at his desk, and drew a check for the sum named. It was written with a tremulous hand, but the broker's contracted, pinched signature was not to be mistaken. Ludder took the check, and, with a simple "Thank you," left the office.

"Now, by the powers above me!" exclaimed the broker, as soon as he was alone, "this city must keep me but a short time longer! That other tool of mine may be down upon me in the same manner. But—let 'em come. Egad—they shall find me missing! They—— Who's coming now?"

The door was opened, and a boy entered. He wore a long face, and trembled with the weight of the news he had to communicate.

"Mr. Gondam. The nurse sent me up. Missus Gondam is dead!"

"Dead! When did she die?"

"About half an hour ago."

"You may go back, and tell them I'll be at home as soon as possible."

The boy withdrew, and the broker brought his fists together with vehement satisfaction.

"Now, by the gods! this is most fortunate!" he uttered, starting across the floor. "I have a millstone about my neck no longer. I can go now as quickly as I please. I'll put her under ground, and then—farewell to Boston!"

CHAPTER XXVII.

GABRIEL PREPARES A MEDICINE OF HIS OWN INVENTION.

Days and nights of senseless torpor passed ere Rosalind was again able to realize the measure of her sorrows. But when her mind finally resumed its powers she had one source of hope—one thought of consolation. She was innocent of Barber's death. With all her sufferings, she no longer had that fearful load upon her soul. She was still pure, and had done no wrong. She had been very sick—so sick that at times her life had been despaired of—and even now she was almost helplessly weak. She had not raved in her unconsciousness, but had been like one bereft of all sense. Faint glimmerings of the past had been manifest in some of her low murmurings, and at times she had appeared to recognize those who were with her. She was thin, even to a shadow, but there was not so much of hopeless agony in her look as before, and she prayed with a more firm reliance upon the mercy of Heaven.

It was early morning on the day succeeding Rosalind's full restoration to sense. She had been awake for several hours, and had been for some time engaged in watching her nurse, who sat by the window at the foot of the bed. This nurse seemed to be a middle-aged woman; she was bent in form, with coarse, red hair, and a red, blotched face. She wore a pair of green spectacles, with side-glasses, and the parts about the eyes appeared to be much inflamed. Her dress was poor and dirty, and her whole appearance bespoke her to be one of the lost ones of the great city—one who had passed all the glitter and hollow entertainments of vice, and had now reached the foot of the hill. She heard the invalid move, and she looked up.

"Do you want anything?" she asked, in a rough, hoarse voice.

"Where am I?" Rosalind inquired.

"You're in this house—in Mrs. Lurkin's house," was the answer.

"Are you Mrs. Lurkin?"

"No—I'm Mrs. Lurkin's servant now—your nurse, if you please."

"Where is Mr. Barber?"

"I guess he's coming now. Somebody's coming up the stairs. He has been very attentive to you, my dear."

Before Rosalind could make any reply Gabriel Barber entered. He approached the bed, and as he found the girl's face fixed upon him, he tried to smile.

"Ah—you are better, Rosalind," he said. "You are on the gaining hand. You've been very sick—did you know it?"

"I know it very well, sir," she replied.

The man turned to the nurse, and told her that she might leave the room. When she was gone he drew a chair up by the side of the bed, and sat down.

"My dear," he said, "I think you have fully regained your reason."

"I have regained reason sufficient to be able to understand why I am here," she replied. Her voice was hollow and weak, but it had great depth of meaning.

"You are here because I love you, Rosalind."

"Spare me now, sir, do not offend my ears with such falsehood till I am better able to bear it."

"Look ye, my girl," the wretch said, with a slight show of threatening in his manner: "We might as well understand each other now as ever. Do you not mean to be my wife?"

"Never!"

"But reflect. You are in a strange city, and among the tens of thousands who surround you, I am the only one to whom you can look for assistance. There has been a marriage ceremony performed between us, and you can fear no shame or danger. You are wholly at my mercy, and I should like to know what you hope to gain by resisting me further."

"Gabriel Barber," spoke the invalid, trying to lift herself upon her elbow, but failing in the attempt, "I have but one hope, though I pray for more than I can hope for. I hope I may die ere you gain such power over me as you aim at!"

"And what do you pray for?"

"That God, with whom all things are possible, may make an honest man of him who persecutes me."

"That means me, I presume."

"Yes."

"Now look here, my dear girl, you are talking nonsense. You don't know half of what you say. It will be best for you to do as I wish. Promise me that when you get well you will live with me as my wife, and I'll do all I can to make you comfortable."

"Comfortable!—and as your companion! Oh! just Heavens! There could not be found for me on earth a deeper hell! Ere I'd submit I'd let out my own life, and thus give back my soul to God in its purity while I had the power!"

Rosalind buried her face in the pillow as she ceased speaking, and her effort seemed to have exhausted her. Barber gazed upon her a few moments, and then arose and left the room. There was a dark look upon his coarse features, and he muttered half-formed sentences to himself as he descended the stairs. In the hall he met Mrs. Lurkin, who informed him that a gentleman in the parlor wished to see him. At that moment the nurse came out from the kitchen, and asked Barber if she should go back to the invalid's room. He told her yes, and then went to see his visitor, whom he found to be none other than Thomas Gondam.

"You here?" cried Gabriel, taking the broker by the hand.

"Yes—I thought I'd see how you were getting along," returned Gondam. "I received your letter, stating where you had put up, and, as I happened to have nothing else to do, I thought I'd come on. I am free now."

"Free?"

"Yes. My wife is dead and buried."

"Ah—dead, is she? What was the matter?"

"O—she has been ailing for a long time—a kind of consumption, I think. But how is the girl? You wrote that she was very sick."

"So she is. She only came to her senses yesterday."

"And is she fully conscious now?"

"Yes. I had just come from her room when you came. She is conscious enough."

"But—how does she seem to take it?"

"She's going to give us trouble. She swears that she will die before she will be my wife."

"Perhaps she only hopes to frighten you."

"No, no, Gondam—I can read her too well to believe any such stuff as that. I tell you she means it. She'll strain every nerve till she finds some opportunity to blow on us—that is, if she gets well."

"But how is she? What does the doctor think? Does he think she can get well?"

"I don't know what he thinks, and I don't know as it makes much odds."

Thomas Gondam gazed eagerly into Gabriel Barber's face, and Gabriel Barber gazed full as eagerly into Thomas Gondam's face. They seemed anxious to read each other's thoughts without speaking. Finally they bent their eyes to the floor, and when the silence had become quite ominous Gondam ventured to speak.

"I shouldn't want her to get loose now. I had hoped that she would have staid with you. I hoped you might conquer her at once."

"You see, she's been right down sick ever since she got here," returned Barber, "so I have let her have her own way. But I tell you it's no use. She's as ugly as sin, and as contrary as a mule. The same spirit that was in her when she gave me that tap on the head is in her now. She knows that there can be no danger in her going back to Boston, and I'm afraid she'll contrive some means to give me the slip."

"By the powers, Gabriel, she must not do that!"

"I don't want her to do it."

"But—you remember I was to give you ten thousand dollars——"

"Fifteen we made it, you know."

"So it was. I was to give you fifteen thousand when Rosalind was wholly yours."

"But if she had chanced to die when she was so sick?"

"All the same," answered the broker, with strange eagerness. "You should have had it all the same."

Again the two men gazed upon each other, and again bent their eyes thoughtfully to the floor.

"But," said Barber, in a hesitating mood, "suppose anything should happen that she didn't get well, even now."

"I should be perfectly satisfied," returned Gondam, in an undertone.

"You see she'll be troublesome, any way," pursued the shyster. "If she does get well, it must be some time first, and there'll be a good deal of anxiety the while. And when she is well—then comes the nip. I tell you, 'twill be next to impossible to keep her. I can read her. When you come across a woman with a will like hers, you may be sure she will never yield. She swears she will take her own life first."

"Then she can't hold her life as of much value," suggested the broker.

"Of course she can't," was the response.

"I should think it would be a mercy for her to die before she sees any more trouble," Gondam said, with a searching look into his companion's face.

"Just my opinion, exactly," returned Barber.

Thomas Gondam arose from his chair, and walked to the window and looked out. Presently he turned back and spoke:

"Barber, of course I couldn't do anything to help—Rosalind; for she must n't see me, you know, in this place."

"No," answered Barber, "you couldn't help her."

"Well—I shall remain here in the city for some days—I shall stop at the Tammany—and I hope to know just how she is getting along before I leave. If such a thing *should* happen as her dying, you and I could return to Boston together."

"Yes—that would be convenient."

Shortly after this Gondam took his leave, and when he was gone, Mr. Barber took his hat, and also walked out. He went to a small drug store, which was patronized by the lowest classes, and asked for some arsenic. The keeper, who was a seedy looking individual, asked how much he wanted.

"I want as much as will kill a large dog," returned Barber.

"Ah—going into that, eh?"

"Why—the truth is," exclaimed the lawyer, "I have a huge bull-dog, and he is more trouble than he's worth. My wife declares she'll keep him in spite of me. You see I proposed selling him, but such a row you never heard. I must get rid of him quietly, for if she mistrusted that I had put him out of the way, I should never hear the last of it."

The druggist smiled at his customer's domestic picture, and then weighed out some of the poison.

"There—that'll be enough to kill half a dozen dogs," he said, as he tied it up.

"I suppose enough of it will adhere to a piece of meat as large as my fist?"

"Yes—plenty."

Gabriel Barber paid for the poison, and went away. He returned at once to Mrs. Lurkin's, and went to Rosalind's chamber. The invalid was asleep, and the nurse sat by the window.

"How long has she been asleep?" he asked, in a whisper.

"About half an hour, sir," the nurse replied.

"Does she seem to be gaining any?"

"Really, sir, I coulda't say. But she sleeps well now."

"You were up nearly all night, weren't you?"

"Part of the night, sir. I slept some."

"Well—I will sit here awhile, and you may go out and take an airing. But say—if she should wake up before you come back, what medicine is she to take?"

"This—in this phial, sir," returned the nurse, stepping to the sideboard, and setting aside the mixture. "She is to take a table-spoon full of it."

"That will do. Ah—stop. Tell Mrs. Lurkin to send me up a bottle of wine."

The nurse left the room, and ere long the landlady stepped softly in, and placed a bottle and glass upon the sideboard. She simply cast a look upon the sleeper, and retired without speaking. Barber poured out a glass of the wine and drank it, and then took the medicine phial and uncorked it. It was a simple solution of some tasteless salts, and after he had touched his tongue with it, he set it down, and took the paper which the druggist had given him from his pocket. He stepped noiselessly to the bed, and bent over the invalid. She slept soundly, and the man thought he saw a smile upon her face.

"It is better so," he muttered to himself. "She'll only live to suffer if she gets well. She won't endure my company—she'll never be mine—she's fixed on that as firmly as ever a whim got fixed in woman's head. And then—she might not get well at all. Egad—I don't think the doctor could save her if I should let him have his own way. It's better so. I've engaged to take care of her for a *consideration*. I must not lose that; and yet, how can I take care of her if she won't be taken care of? It's better—thus!"

As he ceased his muttering, he poured nearly all of the powder into the phial, and then he shook it for some moments. The phial was a large one, and he thought the sediment would not be noticed. After this he sat down by the bed, and watched the sleeper. He sat there half an hour, but she did not awake. Another half hour passed, and still the worn girl slept on.

"Never mind," the wretch said, as he arose and shook the phial again. "The nurse will give it, and never know the difference."

He waited until the mixture looked clear, and then he went out. He had planned a very convenient way of taking care of the girl that had been given into his keeping!

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

A MOON-RISE BY THE SEA.

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

I dreamed we stood on ocean's shore,
Just at the hour the moon arose,
And that, with tears, I told thee o'er
My love and loneliness and woes.
We lingered long—yet all the while
Thou didst not turn one glance on me,
But, with a strange, *strange*, mournful smile,
Gazed on that moon-rise by the sea.

And yet I saw thy cold blue eyes—
Oh, what a strange calm was there!
I almost wonder that the skies
Such look of heartless pride should bear.
And that from every peaceful star
Some pitying angel did not bend
And weep for her who knelt afar
Bereft of idol and of friend.

Methought the mocking winds came near
And flung thy dark brown curls aside,
And kissed thee—then an envious tear,
I could not stifle with my pride,
Fell at thy feet. I saw thee cast
Thy glance one moment on the sand,
Then, with the fondness of the past,
Thou didst come near and grasp my hand.

"I have a palace in the deep,
In whose vast halls there's not a light,
Save from the burning gems I keep—
Yet it is gloriously bright!
My sea-nymphs guard a casket there
That shines the bridal-pearl for thee:
O'er thy white arms and through thy hair
They'll flash," thou saidst, "bewilderingly."

Then is it strange I was deceived
By the soft sweetness of thy word?
Alas! what had I not believed
If from thy lip it had been heard?
Low on thy heart my trusting head
With rapture's weight sank languidly,
As with a murmuring voice I said:
"And I shall be so blest *with thee*."

"*With me?* Yes—yes! My clasp is round
Thee—do not shrink from love's fond fold!"
Then with a laugh of wildest sound,
Loosed—*o'er the waters*—was thy hold
Alone, without reproach or scream,
I sank for aye from light and—*thee*.
Now life is haunted by a dream,
That dream a Moon-rise by the Sea.

THE FREEDOM OF THE HOUSE.

BY CLARA SYDNEY.

Most people are fond of having pleasant company, but very few people know how to make their company feel themselves at home. A great deal is said on the subject of hospitality, and great exertions are frequently made to prove one's richness in this regard. But, as a general thing, the more extra effort and expense you make, especially the more form and *gentility* you get up for the occasion, the more ill at ease and unnatural in manner you render your guests.

True hospitality, we opine, consists in the warm and hearty welcome of one's friends, far more than in all the fuss and show which is made for their entertainment. Feed them well, of course, if you have anything to eat yourselves; but 'tis to be presumed that your own daily fare is upon the things that are pleasant to the taste and *good* for food, also that your board is cleanly and well ordered, even when you are alone, and if these presumptions be correct, what is the use of an extra display?

Any one who has mingled much in society, who has tasted the curious economy of households, knows very well that he always experiences the truest comfort and pleasure when visiting those families which allow him to enter as one of themselves, and to partake of "the freedom of the house" with their own members.

What a "limbo of vanity" is that house in which one, when upon a visit, must be always upon his best behavior, where he must continually be entertaining or entertained; where he has no feeling of freedom in moving about, but must continue in the parlors, though he shiver with cold, when there is a genial fire in the basement or the nursery; where he must sit bolt upright when he longs to lounge, and where he feels constrained to say "cannot" and "will not" whenhe wants to say "can't" and "won't," not to mention feeling expected to interlard his conversation with what a certain learned young lady called "technical phrases," and a smattering of French or Italian, when he would rather confine himself to simple vernacular; where he must incommode and annoy himself by ridiculous table forms, which are of no possible benefit to anybody, in which, as a sensible elderly woman once remarked, "there hain't no moral principle whatever."

The very heart and soul of comfort is dead and dry as a mummy in such a household as this, and truly it seems that those persons whose desire and aim it is to form such an one, can have no warmth or depth of heart or intellect. They are like tinsel ornaments—often bright and showy, but hollow as a bubble.

On the other hand, what a region of delights is the house where the visitor is under no other restraint than that imposed by true kindness and courtesy. Where Chesterfield is not despised, but where he does not take the place of the Bible; where he is studied and practiced according to common sense and comfort. In such a house one can, in a measure, feel "at home," and as he is aware that he need not try to be extraordinarily polished or agreeable, he will very likely be able to act up to the full measure of social excellence which nature bestowed upon him.

Let none make a mistake in thinking that the courtesies, large or small, of life are unimportant. This is not true; *politeness* is just as much a Scripture command as is honesty, but *forms* of politeness in which are no soul, into which no soul can possibly be infused—*these* are the things against which to war.

That disregard of polished manners which is vulgarity, and that "plainness" which is coarseness, are repulsive wherever they are found. Yet many, both young and old, pride themselves upon these disgusting ways. Such persons have not yet learned what is *religion*.

Than that courteousness which springs spontaneously from a truly refined and kindly nature, few things are more beautiful.

When we hear one scoffing at the idea of polish and refinement of thought and act, we wonder that he does not consider of the *company* which he is, perchance—if so be that his white garments be not forgotten—soon to keep. Would not a man about to be asked into the court of some great king, to walk and talk with dukes and princes, take some thought about how he should carry himself before them? But just before *us*, every one, there is a door which will open to usher us into a court such as no earthly city ever held, and *we* are to walk and talk with angels and archangels,—with principalities and powers we shall have to do. Surely we all need to "mind our manners."

SOWING WILD OATS.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

Many a young man has been lured from the path of virtue, and enticed into the road that leads, by an easy descent, into the accursed valley of destruction, through the thoughtless speech of some thoughtless person, talking flippantly about sowing wild oats, as a thing to be expected in youth.

"I had one lesson on this subject from the lips of an aged counselor," said a valued friend to me, not long since, "which has never been forgotten. The timely warning saved me. I was nineteen years of age, and had just entered college. Young men were there from nearly every State in the Union, and some of them already sadly corrupted. I was social, in high health and spirits, and with an imagination forever carrying me beyond the actual and the present. Before I had time for reflection, and before even a consciousness of wrong had reached me, I was afloat on a dangerous sea, my boat gliding swiftly forward, and the Syren's songs already in my ears.

"One night we had a wine party in the town, which ended in excesses, the thought of which has called a burning blush to my cheeks a hundred times since. I had not been very well for some days previously, suffering from constant headache and low febrile symptoms. The dissipation of a night turned the scale upon the wrong side, and I was so ill on the next day, that it was thought best to call in a physician. He was an old man, of the old school of gentlemen, and wise, thoughtful and kind. He commenced, at once, the business of finding out everything in regard to my habits, principles, and modes of thought, and there was something in him that so inspired me with confidence, that I concealed nothing. He looked grave, and offered a remonstrance.

"'Oh,' said I, almost lightly, 'young men must sow their wild oats. The ground will be so much the better prepared for seeding wheat, after the crop is taken.'

"'An error of the gravest character,' he replied, seriously, 'and one that has ruined its thousands and its tens of thousands of young men. Is a garden better prepared for the reception of good seed, for having been first permitted to grow weeds? I put the question to your common sense. Are there not some soils so filled with all manner of evil seeds, that the gardener, with his utmost toil and care, can scarcely remove the vigorous plants that spring to life in the warm sunshine and rain? It is no mere comparison, that of the human soul to a garden. It is, in reality, a spiritual garden. Truth is the good seed which is sown in this garden, false principles the evil seed, or 'wild oats,' which the enemy's hand scatters, if permitted, upon its virgin soil. Now, is it not an insult to reason to say that the man will be a wiser, truer, better man, for having false principles, leading at once to an evil life, sown upon the ground of his mind in youth, as it would be to say that a garden would be more thrifty in after years, for being first permitted to grow weeds?

"'My stranger friend! I have lived almost to the completion of life's earthly cycle, and have seen a sad number of young men lost to the world, lost to themselves, and lost, I fear, to the company of God's blessed angels, in consequence of that single false idea sown into the earth of their minds. Oh, cast it out at once! Keep yourself pure. Let right principles, chaste thoughts, noble purposes, manly aims, grow in your garden—not the accursed wild oats! Be temperate, prudent, virtuous, obedient to superiors, honorable, kind. Aim to be a man—not a sensualist. Govern yourself as a man, instead of letting passion, appetite, or any sensual desire rule you as a tyrant. Sow no more wild oats. You will find trouble enough in your after life with the seed already scattered in your fields.'

"The scales," said my friend, "dropped at once from my eyes. I saw that the good old physician was right, and that this cant about sowing wild oats involved one of the most dangerous fallacies into which the mind of a young man could fall. It was my last folly of this kind."

NAPOLEON "LE GRANDE."

BY GEORGIANNA HERBERT.

"Grand" enough, undoubtedly; no one can well help wondering at and admiring the power and force of his character.

Manward, nationward, he was astonishing, and, as the world understands the word, glorious; but womanward he was altogether detestable.

Not only did he divorce his wife, who was certainly, to say the worst of her, as good as he was, but he played mean tyrant towards the best and noblest ladies of his empire. Vain and jealous, this "great man" could not bear to hear a woman praised—even for her beauty. He wished to be himself the theme of every tongue, and the object of all admiration. His pomposity, his self-esteem, were rampant—never was a vainer mortal than Napoleon. How mean was his hatred and persecution of Madam De Stael; how doubly mean his treatment of the virtuous and beautiful Madam Recamier, whom he banished from her home, and sent to dwell, in comparative poverty, where she best could, afar from her beloved Paris.

He tried to disgrace her, and partly in revenge for her quiet contempt of his villainy, and partly out of envy, because of the general admiration her loveliness excited, he banished her.

When this lady was informed of the decree against her, she remarked to one of Napoleon's officers—

"Ah! sir, a great man may be pardoned the weakness of loving women, but not that of fearing them."

How thoroughly must she have despised her spiteful would-be lover.

And even into exile the ill-will of the emperor followed the devoted ladies of his jealousy. It only needed to call upon them to draw down on any man's head the imperial wrath.

The women, to suit Napoleon, should all have been pretty, gentle puppets, that could talk but loving nonsense, and do no other than fall delighted into his arms the moment he stretched them out, saying, or even looking, "Come." A foreknowledge of the woman's rights conventions of our day would have thrown the illustrious Bonaparte into fits. He seemed always to have an especial spite against female power and independence.

There is one respect in which the emperor has, perhaps, been too severely blamed. He certainly bore long and patiently with his wife Josephine. If Goodrich is to be credited, she tried her husband exceedingly. But to women generally he acted like an untaught and surly boor—to this there was one honorable exception. Madam de Genlis had been the governess of the Bourbons. During Napoleon's time she was in great need, and he allowed her a monthly pension of fifty francs. This favor was delicately managed—the emperor requesting the lady to make semi-monthly communications to him on national matters.

This was being a gentleman.

Well would it have been for his fair fame had Napoleon always thus conducted himself; but his conduct to Madam Chevreuse killed her. She was another of his exiles.

Madam Recamier and Madam De Stael did not lose life, and they added to their fame by being exiled. The world owes "Corinne" and "Germany" to Napoleon's persecution of the most distinguished authoress of his time.

Madam Charpentier was a friend to Napoleon when he was glad enough to accept favors. She lodged and fed him freely, and to relieve him of any burdensome sense of obligation, always assured him that his pleasant company was ample pay for food and shelter.

When this heroic gentleman had made himself supreme lord and king of France, and Madam Charpentier, then in ill-health, poverty, and trouble of many kinds, presented herself timidly before him to implore his aid, how did he receive her? He addressed the poor lady in such a brutal tone, that she fell fainting to the floor. He afterwards—the next day—sent her the relief she needed, but what amount of gold could atone for the suffering he had occasioned—for the ingratitude he had manifested?

Napoleon may have been wonderful, and in some respects glorious; but for all that he was, in plain parlance, an imperial hog. He was most dishonorable, too, in regard to letters, breaking or causing to be broken open any number of private letters that he could lay hands on.

How it is that a Christian historian can eulogize a man whose private character had so many black marks upon it as had that of Napoleon, is certainly a strange thing.

THE BLACK PRINCE.

At the battle of Poictiers, fought in the year 1356, the English army, commanded by Prince Edward, did not amount to twelve thousand men; while that of the French, under King John, exceeded sixty thousand. Notwithstanding so great a disproportion in point of numbers, the courage of the English, and the good conduct of the prince, gained the victory. The French forces were completely defeated; and King John, with many other persons of rank, was taken prisoner. Here commences the royal and truly admirable heroism of Edward; for victories are vulgar things in comparison with that moderation and humanity displayed by a young prince of twenty-seven years of age, not yet cooled from the fury of battle, and elated by as extraordinary and unexpected success as had ever crowned the arms of any commander. He came forth to meet the captive king with all the marks of regard and sympathy; administered comfort to him amidst his misfortunes; paid him the tribute of praise due to his valor; and ascribed his own victory merely to the blind chance of war, or to a superior providence, which controls all the efforts of human art and prudence. The behavior of John showed him not unworthy of his courteous treatment. His present abject fortune never made him forget that he was a king. More touched by Edward's generosity than by his own calamities, he said, that notwithstanding his own defeat and captivity, his honor was still unimpaired; and that though he yielded the victory, it was at least gained by a prince of the most consummate valor and humanity.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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DISABILITIES OF WOMEN.

The question of woman's disabilities, civil and political—or rather, the question of woman's rights, if it has not assumed new forms, has found new and potent advocates. The forlorn hope of the small army of outcriers against "man's inhumanity to *woman*," is no longer left to the lead of a few ancient spinsters, refulgent of petticoats and thirsting for the prerogatives of breeches, but is marshaled—looking anything now but a forlorn hope—by some of the very male lights and authorities of our land and age. Eminent jurists join hands with equally eminent romancists, to vindicate the rights of woman—by arguments, and from stand-points that would have startled the public sense a dozen years agone, but which now seem to meet with large toleration, if not with entire approval.

Counselor Brady, in a recent lecture, took a bold stand in favor of the increase of woman's statutory privileges. He was, in her behalf, for making divorce easier in our State—which God forbid!—for giving her ampler power over property, and, when single, for allowing her the privilege of franchise. Indeed, the Counselor was of opinion that a single woman, of age—a point of time difficult to ascertain of most women—is the equal of man, and in every respect entitled to equal civil and political privileges. We do not say nay. There is nothing that could truly tend to her happiness and glory, that we would deny to woman. As the natural and inevitable tribute to our admiration and love for woman, we pronounce her, in our heart of hearts, the "better half," and crown her with sovereign powers; yet we will say, that *we do not believe that all the statutes that could be framed, in all time, could of themselves compel, or commend so much of homage or tribute from man to woman, as she can always compel by the invincible law of love.*

And this is the law that will, however many statutes may be framed, in the great majority of hearts and homes rule supreme, deciding all property and franchise questions. Still, it is due to women that the safeguard of positive law should be thrown around their rights of person and of property, to protect them against the ruinous consequences resulting from cunning rapacity, love changed to hate, demoralization, drunkenness, sudden death, and all the innumerable ills and contingencies of this sad and uncertain world.

AN UNDENIABLE TRUTH.

In a recent issue, the *Daily Times* remarks, in substance, that no paper that was fit to live ever yet ceased to exist from a want of patronage. We are glad to see our neighbors advancing such ideas—it conclusively proves that they understand their business. The man who publishes a *good* paper, at a reasonable price, is just as sure to succeed, as is the merchant of known integrity who keeps *good* goods, and sells them at a *fair* profit. We have never known such a man to fail in mercantile business; and just so we can say, so far as our experience goes, in reference to the matter of publishing newspapers; but the paper to succeed must be *good*, and its conductors must understand their business thoroughly—they must give their readers the worth of their money, and if possible, more than the worth of their money—the more matter they can give the better for all concerned. This is the reason why we devote all our space to reading matter, and exclude advertisements altogether. But great care must be exercised in regard to the *quality* of the matter as well as the *quantity*. This is one of the great secrets of newspaper prosperity; and it is a secret that few seem to understand. It is very easy to fill up the columns of a newspaper with "stale, flat and unprofitable" reading; but not so easy to make a paper readable, lively, instructive and interesting—to make a paper, in short, that people will be anxious to get possession of, and which will both instruct and entertain. This is what we aim to make the LEDGER; how far we have succeeded, it does not become us to say—we leave that for the reader to judge for himself.

ANOTHER SWINDLE EXPOSED.

A newspaper concern conducted on the "gift enterprise" plan was recently broken up by the police. The parties at the bottom of the swindle had advertised the paper extensively, and blazoned their so-called "list of valuable gifts" far and wide. Hundreds of people living at a distance have forwarded subscriptions to these tricky publishers, not a cent of which will the victims ever see again; and in many cases the scamps had not even the grace to forward their deluded "subscribers" a brass pencil, a galvanized breast-pin, or any other of their "valuable gifts."

"BE JUST, AND FEAR NOT."

This is a motto which our very soul loves. It is a noble, manly, and encouraging motto—adapted to all classes and conditions; to the young, the middle-aged, and the hoary-headed. Young man, we would persuade you to adopt it as yours; it will be a source of comfort—a stay and prop to you through all the troubles, turmoils, and anxieties of life. When you are convinced that you have done right—that you have acted *justly*—you can confidingly trust the result to the all-wise Ruler.

POSTAGE STAMPS FOR SALE at this office, in quantities to suit purchasers, at three per cent. discount.

SUICIDE.

"Thou shalt not kill" is as evidently an injunction against self-destruction as against murder. Human life is God's property—sacred to the purposes for which He designs it, and sacred in that, save as man may abuse it, it is a good and a blessing. All the pleas of all the suicides cannot justify self-murder. Most of the pleas are miserably weak, cowardly, and contemptible. To stand up against weariness and disaster, is the crowned courage of our lives. Virtue is born of suffering and subduing, and not of despairing and succumbing.

The recent murders and suicide by one Brennan, in California, while commented on by some as a manly and heroic ending of one's anguish, strike us as one of the most cowardly and God-defying shufflings-off of this "mortal coil" of which we have ever heard. Admit that pecuniary involvement is a great burthen to a man sensitive of his honor; still, this is a world, and peculiarly this is a country, where no involvement, unless it be *criminal*, need be so utterly hopeless as to warrant the fleeing from it by suicide.

Brennan does not appear to have done anything personally criminal or dishonorable. He had lost his own property, and been the innocent cause of some other people losing theirs. Instead of stopping short and measuring his difficulties, and then taking the fairest possible new start, he fell to brooding over—not his real honor, but his false pride. He could not bear the thought of living to meet one imputation or reproach. He was not sure that he would be called to meet one. He made no effort to ascertain whether or not he would be held culpable by any one. Too selfishly proud to confide in those who had confided in him, or to ask while living those exercises of friendship he desired when dead, he resolved to die. And not only to die himself, but to drag down to death, without asking their consent, an innocent family—a lovely and confiding wife, and three beautiful children. He had not courage to stay with those whom he had sworn to cherish, and was bound to protect, and he was too cowardly to meet death until he had paved the way with their corpses.

By all this frightful tragedy he paid no debt—not even that of Nature, decently, for she abhors such foreclosure of life. Instead of relieving himself from any dilemma, he crowned all his life's errors and mistakes by a deed of tremendous crime, and most merited obloquy. We cannot look at the matter in any other light. We perceive no manly courage, no heroism in such a tragedy. We see only a diseased sensitiveness, a false perception of duty and honor, and overweening, selfish pride, and altogether a weak and cowardly nature. A truly brave man would have trusted to God's providence and lived on for the sake of his family, his friends, his creditors and his honor. So long as he was not criminal, all parties would have acquitted him, and bid him God-speed to new and better fortunes.

RICH MEN'S SONS.

Desirable as wealth may be, how little it generally seems to bless those who inherit it—especially the sons of rich men. Inherited wealth, indeed, has so frequently proved a curse, instead of a blessing to such, that observant people are moved by the very sight of them to exclaim, "*Poor* fellows, we pity you!"

And is there not room for pity, instead of congratulation, in view of the temptations to which rich men's sons are almost inevitably subjected? The surest of these is the temptation to idleness, which has been aptly called the mother of vice.

While labor is viewed, by society in general, as a curse and a degradation, how can the children of opulence be expected to take pleasure in it? Should they not rather be expected to shun it? But, apart from such considerations as this, where is their motive to toil to come from? The sons of the poor, who have inherited only a good name at most, have the stimulus of a prospective improvement in their pecuniary condition to prompt them. Beginning to labor from necessity, they soon acquire the habit of industry, which is a very great thing, and so continue to labor from the very love of it. To them activity is a necessity. Idleness would prove a great bore, if not an actual calamity. Then again, when first independence, and then wealth, perchance, crowns the perseverance of the latter class, they know how to appreciate the value of their acquisitions. They are not so apt to squander their means as those who have inherited wealth. "Come easy, go easy" is a rule which has no application to them. It applies to rich men's sons, who have realized its truth, too generally, to their sorrow!

Every rich man should give his sons some trade. We use the word in its widest sense, and as meaning some settled, systematic employment. This, if never followed by them, would be of no disadvantage, but an actual advantage. If needed, in after life, because of reverses, it would furnish a noble resource.

INGRATITUDE

What a crime! Could there be any crime worse, in that moral catalogue whereof the laws of man take no account? Surely not.

And yet how frequent the exhibitions of it in society around us! No circle is free from it. There is no sphere of life which knows it not. It is found in business life, in the workshop and the warehouse, in the farm, everywhere, besmearing all that is lovely and of good report with its pitchy blackness! Ay, not even the sacred family circle is free from its foul touch, for even the child is found, times too numerous, ungrateful to the very mother that bore him!

In business affairs, exhibitions of ingratitude have come to our ears, which the reader would scarcely credit were we to mention them. Although one would have thought the late "hard times" especially calculated for the cultivation of gratitude, the result seems to have been the very reverse in cases not a few. Business men have found the very worst of ingrates among their employees, who have seemed ready, some of them, to give them a taste of a fate no less unnatural than that of Actæon, who was devoured, as the fable runs, by his own dogs. He, it is true, was turned into a stag before this was done. But this only suggests a plea in palliation, for the ungrateful modern dogs we allude to do not wait for any such transformation of their victims. They devour them as men—as kind and obliging, because great-hearted men!

But not employees only have proved peculiarly ungrateful during the late money troubles. Business men have too often proved ungrateful to one another, by refusing succor in the hour of sorest need. And so those who have owed all that they have and are to the generosity of certain friends in times past, have coldly turned from them, and left them to sink in fortune, perhaps to rise no more!

A GOOD THOUGHT.—To do good to our enemies may be said to resemble the incense whose aroma perfumes the fire by which it is consumed.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

BOARDING-HOUSES.

Somebody wants me to write an article on the "perils of young women in boarding-houses, and the traps and snares which are there laid for them."

As to "traps and snares," they are not confined to boarding-houses, and not always laid by men; I have known them sprung by very demure-looking young women, who, after all their pains, only caught—themselves. A girl who has a proclivity for evil will follow it, even under the most favorable surroundings for goodness. She will always be her own worst enemy; and a good girl will have an anti-trap instinct, which is her best defense.

As to boarding-house life, I detest it every way; its public feeding, its scandal, its heterogeneousness, its tyrannical edicts against babies and young children, its stifling atmosphere of roast, and boil, and stew, and tobacco-smoke, its punctual delivery of your letters and parcels—*on the entry table*—its way of sweeping your room at most inconvenient hours, and dusting it with one summary whisk from a long-handled, feather-tailed switch; its convenient deafness to the jerk of your bell-wire; its homœopathic coffee and pie; its towels, threadbare in quality, and niggardly in quantity; its parlor showy and shabby, with its inevitable centre-table, with its perennial annuals, its hump-backed rocking-chair, and distorted pictures, and—apoplectic bills.

The necessity it entails of always wearing a mask; of fearing to speak, lest you should tread on the toes of your neighbor's pet hobby, and thereby deprive yourself of the convenient bridge over which the salt and pepper must necessarily travel to your plate, waiters being stupid and scarce; the bore of talking when you feel taciturn, or having your neighbor provokingly insist upon it that you must be ill; the bore of laughing when you feel sad, and hearing thread-bare topics re-discussed, and stale jokes resurrectionized; the misery of never being able to have the first unfolding of your own morning-paper, or of having it incontinently disappear, in company with some unprincipled boarder, bound on a day-break journey, and that day sure to be aggravatingly dull and rainy; the necessity of always turning your keys upon boxes and trunks, and the certainty of losing or misplacing them when you are in a double-twisted, insane hurry; your contracted, closetless space; your inevitable city window prospect of back sheds, with ghostly garments hanging on groaning clothes-lines; of distracted bachelors at upper chamber windows, vainly essaying to sew on missing buttons, and muttering inaudible oaths at their clumsy, needle-pricked fingers.

Now, if you needs must board, go to the biggest and best hotel you can find, where everybody is too much occupied to interfere with your personal business; where waiters are plenty, and it is not high treason to ask for salt with your meat. If your finances forbid this, then, in mercy to yourself, rent a shanty where no third person is a fixture in your family, where you can sneeze when your nose has a call that way, and where your hopes and fears, joys and sorrows will not be leisurely dissected by the cool fingers of malignity, and where that nightmare, Paul Pry-ism, is not always astride of your heart and brain.

That's my opinion of boarding-houses, and may the gods have mercy on the *bored*. FANNY FERN.

LILLIAN.

Oh! Angel, sealed with the great seal
Of Love's eternal name,
Be thou around this little child
A wall of holy flame!

Strew her young life with glorious flowers,
Of Hope's immortal bloom,
Whose beauty for all coming hours
Shall shed a rich perfume!

Oh! lead her softly up and on
The broad and pleasant road,
Beyond the reach of sin, upon
The starry hills of God!

EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

A NEEDED LESSON.

Once in a few months, the city is shocked into a transient excitement by the perpetration of some terrible and mysterious murder. During the coroner's investigation the public mind is kept in a state of feverish excitement; but this soon passes away, and the murder is only remembered by the friends of the victim. No lesson seems to be taught by the horrid event, though, if the young men and women of the city would ponder upon the facts elicited, they would find in them lessons of commanding importance. Nearly every victim of murder becomes a victim through indiscretion, or the gratification of depraved tastes. Some "young gentleman" suddenly disappears; his dead body is found, with the murderer's mark upon it; an investigation follows, and it is proved that the "young gentleman" was last seen in some low haunt—a rum-hole, or a worse place—smoking and drinking with rowdies and ruffians. He may have been a most exemplary young man; that visit to the low haunt may have been his first of the kind, and made simply from motives of curiosity, through the silly conceit that thus he "is seeing life." Truly, he is "seeing life," and, as the sequel shows, it is his last look upon it; he is seeing the life which leads to sudden and bloody death. HOME, with its holy associations, its genial, joy-giving atmosphere, and its endearing ties, is the charmed place where the young should seek for glimpses, yea, and for deep insight, into the only "life" worth experiencing. There they are safe alike from the tempter's wiles and the murderer's weapon.

THE GAMBLERS.

Now and then, at long intervals, the authorities of our cities make a demonstration against this class of social vultures, which causes no little flutter among them, while it receives the plaudits of the community. This generally happens when some new Mayor is installed. Like a new broom, he does well for a little while, and then we hear no more in the papers about "descents" upon such and such "gambling hells."

The epithet of spasmodic is the most fitting to apply to these demonstrations. And yet, in so designating them, we do not wish to be understood as discrediting the sincerity of the authorities concerned. We are willing to believe that they are not only sincere, but earnest. We suppose, finding little or no disposition, on the parts of the courts, to punish the offenders, the Mayors get discouraged, and conclude to let them "slide" thereafter. And so gambling is resumed in many a place which had been represented as utterly broken up, and the work of destruction goes on as before. Citizens who were, for a time, frightened from the gaming table, return to their secret haunts, and take a new plunge into the sea of hazard, that bottomless sea where so many wrecks of human hopes, and loves, and virtues have been made!

GIFT-ENTERPRISE VICTIM.

GREENSBURGH, *April 4th*, 1858.

MR. ROBERT BONNER:—*Dear Sir*—I sent C. E. Todd & Co., of 392 Broome street, New York, $5 for one of their gold pencils and gifts, and received a pencil worth $1 50, and a chain worth nothing, being only a bronze thing. The pencil was represented to be worth $5, and the chain worth $15; and seeing it since stated in the LEDGER that the concern was broken up, I want to know if I can get my money, or a part of it, back. Your notice in the LEDGER some weeks ago was one day too late to save my V. I am a young man, rising twenty-two years of age, just starting out in the world, and have nothing but what I work hard for, and judging, from the tone of your paper, that you are an obliging man, I send you these few lines, to see if you could do anything for me, a constant reader of the LEDGER. Address Adam Gosser, Greensburgh, Westmoreland Co., Pa.

Yours respectfully, ADAM GOSSER.

REPLY.

We can do nothing for you, Adam. Your money is gone, past recovery. Had you paid attention to what we have repeatedly said in the LEDGER, during the past six or eight months, concerning "gift enterprises," your money would not have been thus foolishly thrown away. And now, Adam, let us ask you how any reasonable man could expect C. E. Todd & Co., or anybody else, to give him a gold pencil worth $5 and a gold chain worth $15 for a single "V?" Will any of your Greensburgh neighbors give you $20 for $5? Will *you* give anybody $20 for $5? Is it customary for anybody anywhere to give $20 for $5? Is it the practice of merchants or traders of any kind to give a customer goods worth four times as much as the cash he pays them, or, in fact, worth any more at all? A man who sells dry-goods, jewelry, books, gold pens, or anything else, does so for the purpose of making money. To the first outlay for his stock he must add a liberal per centage to cover rent, insurance, interest, clerk-hire, wear and tear, and general expenses, and must therefore sell his goods at an advance on their cost, in order to save himself from actual loss. This being the case, whenever persons advertise to give a customer articles worth more than his money, it is evident that there is cheating somewhere. An honest man can't do such a thing, nor will he try to do it. He might as well try to lift himself over a fence by the straps of his boots. Remember this fundamental truth, Adam, and never again bite at such bait. You can't even give the most cautious nibble at it without being hooked. And New York is full of tricky anglers, who stretch their lines and display their gilded bait from one end of the Union to the other. Beware of them. Give them a wide berth, no matter how plausible their advertisements, or how strongly they are recommended by circulars or editorial notices. We have done our duty in warning our readers against them, and have thereby saved hundreds and thousands from losing their "V's" as you did, while to others the warning, unfortunately, came too late. Your only safety lies in inflexibly refusing to send money to anybody who attempts to seduce customers into patronizing him by offering them valuable gifts over and above the goods legitimately paid for; or, in other words, by offering *something* for *nothing*. You *ought* to know that nobody can do that.

PUBLIC PLUNDER.

It would seem, from the national, state, and municipal "committees of investigation," and the developments made through public and private channels, that there is precious little honesty left among the officials of the land. Congress has its purgation committees; the Legislature has *its* purgative committees; the Common Council has *its* purgation committees. The lobby at Washington are exposed; the lobby at Albany are exposed; the lobby at the City Hall are exposed. We are constantly getting from every quarter "still more astounding developments," and have become so accustomed to them, that nothing could now "astound" us but the discovery of a little official integrity. *That* would indeed be overwhelming, besides being invested with the charm of novelty. The subject of such an exhibition would at once become a hero, by the side of whom the great Panjamdrum himself would be quenched into utter insignificance. If things go on much longer as they have been going on for the last few years, the people will be tempted to abolish Congress, Legislatures, and Common Councils, and let "government" go by the board altogether, or take it into their own hands on the "vigilance committee" system—an event which would be unspeakably deplorable. But we hope for better men and better things in the future. The "showing up" which certain parties have undergone has awakened the people, and the high official places which once knew these huckstering politicians will, we hope, soon know them no more forever.

DIVORCED HUSBANDS AND WIVES.

A case recently came up in this city which is of great importance to husbands and wives, citizens of New York, who have obtained divorces in other States and married again. A man who was married in this State several years ago, subsequently went to Indiana, leaving his wife here, obtained a divorce there, came back to this city and married a second wife, and was arrested and held to bail for bigamy. How the matter will be ultimately decided we do not know; but, of course, it will occasion the prisoner much mortification and expense, even if he escape the State's Prison. The fact is, the laws of New York do not recognize divorces obtained in other States for desertion, incompatibility of temper, and the many other things for which divorces can be so easily got in some States, when the parties were married here and one of them still resides here. Persons who run off to the West and get divorces should remember this, and be careful how they come back here to get a second wife, or how they travel with her in this State, or how they leave any property here which the first wife or creditors can get hold of.

MODESTY.

There is a resistless charm in a modest demeanor, which is worth more than all the arts by which designing women seem to captivate the opposite sex. Meretricious attractions may chance to please to-day; but native excellence, with the simple setting of modesty, will delight to-morrow, and next day, and so on, without interruption. Moreover, the pleasure which we derive from spurious or shallow charms is always followed by disgust, when we come to see that we have been imposed upon. It is not agreeable to our *amour propre* to know and feel that we have been cheated. The old paradox about "beauty unadorned," has much truth in it, and is very pointedly and prettily rendered in the following epigram:

"As lamps burn silent with unconscious light,
So modest ease in beauty shines more bright,
Unaiming charms with force resistless fall,
And she who means no mischief does it all!"

THREE KINDS OF PRAISE.—There are three kinds of praise; that which we yield, that which we lend, and that which we pay. We yield it to the powerful from fear, we lend it to the weak from interest, and we pay it to the deserving from gratitude.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

INDIVIDUAL character is almost universally a compound from the characters of others. If it is true that one fool makes many, it is not less clear that many fools or many wise men make one. Like the chameleon, men's minds change with the color of what surrounds them. However small may be the world of our own familiar coterie, it conceals from it the world without, just as the minutest objects, held close to the eye, will shut out the sun. Our mental hue depends as completely on the social atmosphere in which we move, as our complexion upon the climate in which we live.

CARE is the tax paid by what are called the higher classes for their privileges and possessions. Often amounting to the full value of the property upon which it is levied, care may be termed the poor-rate of the rich. Care is not a whit improved in his manners since the time of Horace, for he beards the great and the powerful in their very palaces, and scares them even in their throne-like beds, whilst the poor man sleeps undisturbed on his straw pallet. It is difficult to be rich without care, and easy to be happy without wealth.

"I'M terribly distressed," said a clergyman of indifferent reputation for sincerity to a rough neighbor, "to hear you swear so." "Oh, don't let that distress you," said the neighbor; "I swear a great deal, and you pray a great deal, but neither of us means anything by it."

THE salt works in one of our Western States have failed. There was too little of the saline ingredient in the water. The proprietors made excellent salt, but not enough to "save their bacon."

WE don't know which to detest most, slander or fulsome flattery. Perhaps the former is the worst, and the latter the most contemptible. The one is the poison of the serpent, and the other his slime.

A SCIENTIFIC writer asks, "Why is there so much more Indian summer in the West than in the East?" Does not the learned dunce know that there are a hundred times more Indians in the West than in the East?

MANY people go through the world, hearing nothing and seeing nothing. For all valuable purposes, their ears are as deaf as an ear of corn, and their eyes as blind as the eye of a potato.

"THAT'S a very *emphatic* individual," said a gentleman to his companion, as he pointed to an intoxicated fellow leaning against a fence. "How so?" "Why, don't you see how he *leans*? He is in *Italic*."

SOME congregations seem to be particular as to their preachers. One of these gave public notice that they wanted a preacher, but went on to specify that, besides being a good christian, he must have a good moral character.

THERE is nothing that we hate more than hypocritical weepers. We have stood and looked at such when we half expected every tear, as it touched the earth, to crawl off, a pert young crocodile.

WHILST looking recently in a public gallery at a picture utterly unworthy of the reputation of its author, we could not help reflecting that an artist, who draws corks, can't draw pictures, that will draw the public.

A CERTAIN demagogue of our acquaintance says that he belongs to no propaganda society. But he ought to. Such a proper goose should belong to all the propagander societies in the land.

"PLEASE turn your head a little," said a beautiful nurse to her male patient. "You have turned it already, madam," said he. "Ah, sir, I guess you will not die this time."

MUTABILITY being an immutable law of the universe, change is the only thing that is constant—and even that is not, in one sense, at all constant in our pockets.

WHEN a man's heart ossifies, or turns to bone, he dies at once; but when it petrifies, or, in other words, turns to stone, he invariably lives too long for any useful purpose.

WE earnestly hope that the human race is not physically degenerating. And yet there are, we apprehend, very few *full-chested* people now-a-days.

MANY young children lose their lives by playing about sand banks. Like "children of a larger growth," they are overwhelmed by banks of issue and deposit.

WHILST we, the American people, rely upon our institutions to save us, we should be careful to remember that they must rely on us to save them.

THE worst thing that can be said of the most powerful is, that they can take your life; but the same thing can be said of the most weak.

PURE religion may generally be measured by the healthy cheerfulness of its professors, and superstition by the gloom of its victims.

LET those who would successfully affect singularity first determine to be very virtuous, and they will be sure to be very singular.

OLD friends often fall away from us as we grow old. Even our teeth are oftentimes no better than other old friends in this respect.

WE should have all our communications with men as in the presence of God, and with God as in the presence of men.

MOST of our misfortunes are in themselves more endurable than the comments of our friends upon them.

IF petticoat government is not more oppressive now than formerly, it is certainly doubled in extent.

WOMEN too seldom consider the consequences in love—never in resentment.

CHARITY is the only thing that we can give away without losing it.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A MAN named Williams was recently killed in Stormville, Dutchess county, (N. Y.,) while out hunting with his two sons, aged seventeen and nineteen. They were all seated on a fence, and as the eldest son was getting down, his gun went off, and the contents lodged in the old man's throat, killing him instantly. What renders the accident more awful is the fact that it occurred on the Sabbath.

THE congregation of the First Presbyterian Church of Cincinnati, a few Sabbaths since, was much amazed by a man who sprang upon the chancel, and shouted that the Saviour had come. He was with difficulty got to a seat and silenced, but soon commenced his outcries again, when he was taken from the church, and it was discovered that he had been crazed by Spiritualism.

A YOUNG man was lately arrested in Pennsylvania for stealing a horse, and confessed the crime, stating that he knew no other way to get rid of a woman who was constantly importuning him to marry her. Between a wife and a prison, he chose, as he believed, the lesser of two evils.

WM. GURNEY, an alleged counterfeiter, imprisoned in Albany jail, a few evenings since broke through the wall of his cell, which was eighteen inches thick, with the iron leg of his bedstead, and was operating upon the outside wall when he was discovered.

SEVERAL days ago a daughter of Jacob Saunders, of Bloomingdale, N. J., went out of the house after breakfast, expecting to be absent but a few minutes. Not returning, the family became alarmed, and about five o'clock in the afternoon she was found lying behind a manger, dead.

A SUIT was recently brought in a magistrate's court in Detroit, by the husband of a lady who was refused admittance to a public lecture in that city unless she would pay double price, on the ground that her skirts were so extensive they would occupy two seats.

AN Englishman who was bound West, in an emigrant train, being taken sick near Cochecton, was put off the car with his wife and four children to be taken to the poor-house, as they had no money; but the poor fellow died before they could get him there.

DURING a severe thunder-storm which recently occurred in the vicinity of Baltimore, a young man named Samuel D. Hall, who was in an open field, and not near a tree or any other conductor of electric fluid, was struck by lightning and instantly killed.

THE Supreme Court of Louisiana has refused a re-hearing in the argument of the suit for the partition of the celebrated McDonough estate, and so the immense property stands divided between the two cities of Baltimore and New Orleans.

PRINCE ALFRED, Queen Victoria's second son, is said to be a bellicose little chap, and thrashes his elder and effeminate brother, the Prince of Wales, so soundly that his royal father has to box his ears; but his mother only laughs and says, "Let them fight it out."

A GENTLEMAN named Guy P. Matthews has deposited a diamond, found in Virginia, in the Bank of Charlestown (Va.,) which is said to be worth two millions of dollars.

IT is reported in court circles that the French nation will, before long, have an opportunity to rejoice over another heir to the imperial throne.

MABEL, SPINNING.

BY ALICE CARY.

Put on the bands! begin, begin!
My wheel to-day of itself will spin—
  The wool is as white as the daisies;
Before the first lark flew at the sky,
Lem, my lover, went whistling by,
  And my cheek yet burns and blazes
  Like a rose the sunshine praises.

Every bird has its throat in tune,
The air is sweet as the middle June,
  And my beautiful morning-glory,
Before it was time for the day to break,
Opened her blue eyes wide awake
  To hear the wind's light story,
  The wooing wind's light story.

My cows, their foreheads as soft as silk
Seemed to my hands when I went to milk,
  And gave me pails full, and over;
And the doves that pecked at the dewy grass,
Cooed and fluttered to see me pass,
  And the bee on the top of the clover
  Shone with his gold all over.

My busy wheel, run fast, run fast!
You will bring the shadows straight at last,
  Aslant from the meadow willows;
Then fast, and faster, and faster yet,
Till the Day shall turn a somerset
  Clear into her cloudy pillows!
  And the stars go to bed in the billows.

And when the moon comes up in the skies,
And the flowers are shutting their sleepy eyes
  And the bee creeps under the clover—
Oh, then the light will be out in the mill,
And a step will be hurrying down the hill,
  And that will be Lem, my lover!
  My dear, my darling lover.

Then turn by spindle, and off slip band,
And idle wheel, at the well-side stand,
  And, heart, make tenderest hushes;
What though I yet have my gown to spin,
He'll kiss my shoulders and hide them in
  Ripples of rose-red blushes—
  And I shall be dressed with blushes.

RICHARD HOFFMAN;

OR,

THE PEASANT AND THE NOBLEMAN.

A TALE OF LOVE AND RETRIBUTION.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE FATAL COMBAT.

Illston's stroke of policy in inviting the members of the Mermaid's crew who had not voted for him to the exclusion of the only one who had, like most acts of selfishness, produced anything but the result he had anticipated. His schoolfellows considered his conduct shabby, and all but Dawlish treated him with greater coolness than ever. The friendship of the latter, who, although so young, could keenly calculate his interests, in some measure made up to him for the loss of William's protection; but he had to pay a heavy price for it, for Dawlish was the tyrant of the school, capricious in his favors—as most tyrants are—ungenerous, and exacting.

The splendor he had witnessed at the Holm had excited his envy as well as his admiration; but, despite his consciousness that the viscount might one day be useful to him, he could not always resist the pleasure of fagging a lord.

A few days after their return to Eton, his new friend, in fulfillment of a promise he had made, proposed the election of Illston as one of the crew. Alfred Wharton opposed it vehemently, and all but William Thornton sided with him.

The latter declined to vote.

From that day, Dawlish who had hitherto carried everything with a high hand, became the enemy of Alfred. He could not visit his malice upon him personally, for they were both on the same form, but he found the means to wound him on a point in which he felt far more sensitive—his younger brother.

A few days after the party at the Holm, the Earl of Carlington and his visitors drove down to Windsor to witness a rowing-match—Eton against Westminster. Alice and her mother accompanied him; it was one of the happiest days in the life of the fair child: she was to see the Mermaid she had heard so much of—see it with her own eyes, and witness what it could do; and perhaps obtain an opportunity of exchanging a word with William too.

"There! there she is!" exclaimed Alice, as the boat, impelled by young and vigorous arms, darted like an arrow through the water.

"There who is?" demanded Lady Boothroyd.

"The Mermaid, mamma."

"I can't see the name," said the countess, leveling her glass towards the river.

"The white picked with green," said Alice, who, in her eagerness to watch the contest, stood upright in the carriage. "Dawlish pulls the stroke oar, William and Alfred Wharton are the next ones; Murray steers. See, mamma, how regularly the oars dip into the water; not a flash—a spray. Beautiful, beautiful! I am sure the Mermaid must win!"

In the excitement of the race—which was closely contested, the winner being not quite half a length in advance—the speaker waved her handkerchief; and when at last the crew of the Mermaid, with a saucy cheer, threw up their oars as they passed the winning-flag, a silvery, happy laugh replied to them.

Few of our readers are so old as to have forgotten the excitement which a cricket-match, a boat-race, or a contest of any kind between the boys of the two rival schools occasioned in their youthful days. The wild joy of the victors, the eager congratulations of their comrades—every one of whom feels that he has a share in their triumph—contrasted with the half sullen, half defiant looks of the defeated, who invariably assign any reason except the right one—the superiority of their opponents—as the cause of their defeat.

That they never admit.

The party from the Holm were not the last to congratulate the crew of the Mermaid on their victory; the earl—statesman as he was—joined heartily in the excitement, which, doubtless, reminded him of his own boyish days.

"Capital rowing!" he exclaimed; "Eton has not degenerated in that—still maintains her old superiority. The Monarch was the crack boat in my time. I pulled the stroke oar in her when she beat the Vixen. Some remarkable men belonged to her—two bishops and a chief justice."

The boys remembered a lumbering, heavy-built thing called the Monarch rotting bottom upwards in Searle's yard, where it had been lying for years, and laughed at the idea of comparing her to their own light, graceful skiff, which looked, as it danced upon the waters, or cut like an arrow through them, as though it had been launched by the hands of fairy workers.

His lordship, in the gush of his boyish recollections, requested to shake hands with the crew of the Mermaid as he was an old Etonian, and, moreover, one of her Majesty's ministers. Of course he was not refused.

"Who is this young gentleman?" he demanded of his son, as the only member of the crew who had not been invited to the Holm approached the carriage, his handsome countenance flushed with health and exercise.

The viscount hesitated to name him.

"It is William Thornton," exclaimed Alice, extending her hand to him. "Mamma, mamma, will you not speak to him?"

Her parent, however greatly annoyed by her daughter's frankness—which, *par parenthese*, she never learnt from her—possessed too much tact not to hide her feelings, and receive the son of her country neighbor graciously. She even carried her hypocrisy so far as to inquire after the health of his father.

"Thank you, Lady Boothroyd," replied the youth, without removing his eyes from the beaming countenance of his former playfellow, "he was quite well when last I had the pleasure of hearing from him. Well, Alice," he added, addressing the fair child, "did you recognize the Mermaid?"

"Knew her in an instant," was the reply. "I have not forgotten—green picked with white."

For one little instant their hands were clasped in each other. Sir Norman began to feel annoyed at the pertinacity of his daughter's regard for the son of a manufacturer.

"Really, Lady Boothroyd," he exclaimed, "you must dismiss Mademoiselle Jaulain; she is not a fit person to have the care of my daughter—the manners of Alice are frank and rustic to a degree—no reserve, no dignity."

"Not in the least," said her mother.

The eyes of the little offender filled with tears at being so harshly reproved at such a moment; but she read in the sympathizing glance of William that he judged the cause, and thanked her for having incurred blame for his sake.

Not to increase the ill-humor of the baronet and his lady, he took his leave at once; a faint smile rested for an instant on the features of both the children as he bade adieu, and disappeared.

Years were destined to elapse before they met again, but the memory of that smile rested like a sunbeam on the heart of each.

THE PLAY-GROUND BULLY.

The rest of the afternoon was devoted by the boys to cricket.

The game was at its hight when Dawlish, who had been bowling, called, in angry tones, to Charles Wharton to send back the ball, which had fallen near him.

The boy began to look for it.

"Lazy whelp!" muttered the tyrant, impatiently.

"Send it back!" he shouted aloud, after waiting an instant.

"I cannot find it," replied Charles, who had been anxiously looking for it, for he had not the slightest wish to provoke the brutal temper of the speaker.

To this Dawlish made answer by giving him the lie.

In an instant the quiet, gentle youth ceased his search; his pale cheeks colored at the word. Young as he was, he had the consciousness of being a gentleman, and he scornfully retorted the insult.

The game became suspended.

"Did you address yourself to me?" demanded his aggressor, as he strode up to him.

"Undoubtedly."

"You are an impudent little rascal!" exclaimed Dawlish, seizing him by the arm, "and I have made up my mind to punish you. Strip!"

Charles took no notice of the command.

"Off with your jacket!"

The boy refused; and yet he knew that by doing so he should only provoke a double amount of violence. Although so many years the junior of his assailant, Charles Wharton disdained to ask for mercy, or show the slightest sign of fear; on the contrary, his eyes, generally so calm and dreamy, flashed scorn and defiance on him.

Dawlish had seized his victim by the wrist, which he turned so as to render all resistance on his part impossible. Just as he raised a cane to strike him, Alfred, whose attention had been engrossed at a distant part of the field, dashed between them.

"Has he struck you, Charles?" he demanded.

"Not yet."

"Stand aside, Alfred, or I shall mark you," said the *sixth form boy*, with a sneer.

"You shall kill me," replied the generous boy, "before you lay a hand upon my brother. I have marked you for some days past. You have sought this occasion—*made it*. Ask the entire college, and you will not find one to speak an ill word of Charles."

"It is no use to plead character to me," replied Dawlish; "you know the laws of the college as well as I do."

"Quite."

"I have a right to fag him."

"*But not to torture him.*"

"Let him thrash me," whispered Charles in the ear of his brother; "I shan't mind it."

"Torture!" repeated the former speaker; "nothing of the kind—a little correction will do him good. Stand aside, or I shall hit you, although you are on the sixth form."

He advanced, with the evident intention of seizing the arm of Charles a second time, but a blow from the indignant hand of the elder brother sent him reeling.

"It is a battle, then?" said Dawlish, coolly.

"Since you have provoked it."

Alfred Wharton, though tall of his age, was of an exceedingly delicate constitution, and little suited, judging from appearances, to contend with a lad like Dawlish, two years his senior, stoutly built, and possessing, in addition, a scientific knowledge of that art which royalty, in the days of George the Fourth, condescended to patronize and practice.

In other words, he was an experienced boxer.

The contrast in their persons became still more marked when they had removed their jackets for the fight.

"Not for me," exclaimed Charles, clinging to his brother—"not for me; stay, I—I will apologize to Dawlish—submit to be thrashed, if that will satisfy him."

"Nothing will satisfy him now," replied Alfred; "but you have nothing to blame yourself for; he sought the quarrel—*made it*."

Although we have witnessed such contests in our boyish days, and, we fear, taken a share in them, we have not the slightest intention of shocking the feelings, or even hurt the good taste of the majority of our readers by entering into a scientific description of the fight between Dawlish and Alfred. One was prompted by brutal passion and a domineering spirit; the other by the fine, manly feeling of fraternal love to protect his younger brother.

For some time it appeared doubtful to the spectators how the combat would end. If the punishment which Wharton received was severe, so also was that which he inflicted.

His assailant observed that every time he struck him in the chest, the gallant youth changed color. From that moment his victory became assured. He aimed his blows at no other part; and, after a few rounds they began to tell with fearful effect.

Charles who stood by, pale as death, his eyes eloquent in the expression of the mental agony he suffered, could endure the sight no longer.

"He will murder him!" he exclaimed.

"Pooh! pooh! nothing of the kind," cried several of the lads greatly excited by so unusual an event as a battle between two sixth form boys.

Alfred's second saw that his man must soon give in, and Dawlish would celebrate his victory by caning Charles before his brother's face.

"Get some brandy," he whispered to one of his friends. "That will keep him up; his opponent does not half like it."

By the termination of the next round, the messenger had returned with the fiery stimulant, which the spirited boy drank, not to sustain his courage, but his strength.

"Not a tear," he whispered, as he embraced his brother affectionately. "He shall neither fag nor thrash you whilst I live."

The heroic boy kept his word.

During the hour the battle lasted, those around him several times gave him brandy, to enable him to prolong the fight, little suspecting the fatal result destined to arise from their ill-judging conduct.

Dawlish at last became alarmed at the extreme paleness of his antagonist, and asked him if he would give in.

"And see my brother caned?" replied Alfred, fixing his bloodshot eyes upon him.

"Of course."

"Never!"

"Oh, very well; it will give me but little more trouble to finish you. Your pluck is good enough, but you haven't the stamina. I warn you, it will be the last round."

He was right: with undiminished courage the gallant brother staggered, rather than advanced, to meet him. A few blows were struck. Alfred fell.

There was a faint cheer from the admirers and followers of Dawlish, but it was drowned by the indignant murmers of his victim's friends.

"He is ill," exclaimed William Thornton, who had vainly attempted to prevent the fight.

"I know what will revive him," said the victor, flourishing the cane over his head, and advancing towards Charles, who was kneeling, overwhelmed with grief and terror, by the side of the dying youth.

A cry, so loud and piercing that it startled all who heard it, arrested the step of the brutal conqueror. Alfred threw his arms around the neck of his brother, as if he would still protect him.

He did so, but it was with the embrace of death.

"Not a step nearer—not a blow!" exclaimed William Thornton, worked up to an intense pitch of fury.

"No, no!" shouted the Etonians.

Dawlish affected to smile, and still advanced, when the speaker, who had turned to regard his friend, warned him back.

"You have murdered him!" he cried; "respect the dead."

The words were, alas, too true. The gallant boy had rendered up as pure a spirit as ever offered itself a willing sacrifice at the shrine of human love.

Some of our readers, we fear, will pronounce the scene we have described overcharged, and suspect the author of drawing too strongly upon his imagination. To this we reply that the circumstance, with the exception, of course, of the names of the parties, is most strictly true. The boy who died was the son of a nobleman distinguished for his position in the House of Peers, and if we do not name him, it is from a desire not to tear open a wound which time perchance has healed.

The papers were filled with accounts of the fight at the time it occurred, and reprobated, even more strongly than we have ventured to do, the system of fagging at our public schools. Truly, precedent is a great thing in England.

Great was the sensation caused in Eton by the death of Alfred Wharton. As a matter of course, his antagonist—for we presume it would be libelous to call him assassin—at on quitted the school, and being well connected, his family purchased him a commission in a regiment bound for India.

The gallant 01st, which the husband of Lady Bell commanded.

So intense was the grief of Charles that it was months before his guardians thought it advisable to permit his return to college. It is needless to say that he was received with the greatest sympathy and kindness; but a marked change seemed to have taken place in his character. The boy who once expressed an almost childish feeling of gratitude for any little acts of kindness, now received them with indifference; avoided all intercourse with his former companions, including even William, and passed his leisure hours in wandering by himself on the borders of the river, or in Windsor Forest.

For some time it was thought that this peculiarity would wear off, and Charles resume his former habits and manners; but no—they rather seemed to grow upon him; and much curiosity was excited.

His schoolfellows wondered, not unnaturally, how he contrived to pass his time, what were his amusements; and two of them, Thornton and Murray, resolved to watch him.

After tracing him into one of the most secluded parts of the great park, they discovered Charles shooting with a pistol at a mark against a tree, and so intent upon his exercise, that he did not perceive them.

"Hit it, by Jove," whispered Murray; "that was an excellent shot."

It was repeated, with the same effect.

The youths regarded each other, and simultaneously pronounced the name of Dawlish.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

RICHARD HOFFMAN IN THE HOME OF THE BOOTHROYDS.

Two years had elapsed since the attempt made by Carus Kearn upon the life of our hero. The time had been passed by his grandfather in frequent visits to Jersey, or in the deepest retirement at Meldown Park, which, as our readers may recollect, he rented from Sir Norman Boothroyd. A singular change had taken place both in the character and feelings of the merchant; he had lost much of his confidence in human nature, a fearful suspicion that his wife had met with foul play haunted him, and it pointed to his nephew as the guilty one. How light did the disobedience of his daughter and the conduct of her husband now appear in comparison with the atrocity of Carus, against whom the exertions of the lawyer had failed to discover the one link wanting in the chain of evidence. No sum, and his offer had been large and tempting, could induce the drug-vender to confess to whom he had sold the rare and curious poison.

Mr. Bently would at once have broken with his unworthy partner, had not one consideration restrained him.

In the first burst of his indignation at the marriage of Rachel, he had written more than one letter to his nephew, in which he distinctly asserted his conviction that George Hoffman had abstracted the securities. The correspondence of the bankers in India, through whom they had been negotiated, tended to confirm it. Consequently, the reputation of his son-in-law was at the mercy of his bitterest enemy.

More than once the unprincipled ruffian had threatened to make the proofs public, and blast the rising reputation of the man he hated. The stern menaces of his uncle alone restrained him.

"Disgrace me," he said, "and I not only disinherit you, but remove your name from the firm."

It was the last arrow in the quiver of Carus, and, with such a threat suspended over him, no wonder that he hesitated to discharge it.

Rarely did Mr. Bently now visit the city, a circumstance which both surprised and pained his faithful clerk exceedingly, for Peter Mangles could not comprehend how any man could find either amusement or occupation out of business; he never had. To him the mere thought of retiring from it was like striking a balance in the ledger of life, and writing "Finis" at the bottom of the page.

Since the day he first entered the counting-house, the old man had not toiled so hardly, or felt so great a weight of responsibility resting upon his shoulders. He could obtain neither advice, direction, nor assistance from his principal, whose invariable reply to his letters was, "Act as you think best."

Peter did act as he thought best, and never had the affairs of the house been in a more prosperous condition. The yearly balance-sheet showed enormous and still increasing profits; but Mangles, instead of being elated, felt nervous and terrified at his own success.

Although Carus Kearn participated largely in the advantages arising to the firm, he was anything but satisfied. Peter Mangles, in the absence of the principal, alone held the signature of the house. To be sure, the old man invariably asked his opinion on all important transactions, but then he as invariably followed his own; and the junior partner found himself reduced to a mere cipher in the presence of his own clerks. This was gall and wormwood to him; it stung his pride and self-consequence, and crippled him in certain speculations he had undertaken on his own account.

Worse than all, the dark plotter found himself unable to alter it. There was something in the manner of his uncle—the few brief words he had written in reply to his frequent letters of expostulation—that alarmed him. The shadow of the future appeared to be gathering round him dark and menacing; he would have given worlds to penetrate it, but the power was denied him. To a mind like his, the state of agitation and uncertainty in which he existed was not the least part of his punishment.

Peter Mangles was seated at his desk, buried in some exceedingly complicated accounts. Being pressed for time, he had given strict orders not to be interrupted under any pretence till a certain hour, and naturally felt surprised and annoyed when he heard the door open, and some one enter his den, as the junior clerks facetiously designated the old man's private office.

"I thought I left directions not to be disturbed," he muttered, querulously. "Three, eight, six, ought, three, eight, nine, two."

"Well, what is it?" he added.

Not receiving any reply, he raised his eyes from the column of figures before him, and recognized Mr. Bently, whom he had not seen for several months. Peter dropped the pen, popped from his stool, and shook his employer warmly by the hand.

"Glad you are come, Richard!" he exclaimed. "My poor brain could not have stood it much longer. What do you think of Burrow's affair? Shall we take Spoobell's agency? The security is ample enough, and two and three quarters per cent. will leave a pretty fair margin. How about the Agra Bank, Puttach's bills, Palgrave's last invoice? Of course you will not give up the insurance—rascally attempt—indigo rising in the market; coffee heavy on hand, and silk worse. Those last advances were only met in time; might have had a quarter per cent. more, but thought it safest to realize."

Here the speaker paused—not for want of subject, but breath; he had not half exhausted the former yet. Just as he was about to recommence the merchant interrupted him by observing that he knew very little about the affairs.

"What! have you not read my last letters?" demanded Peter.

"As much of them as assured me that you were well," replied his employer.

Here the old clerk gave a dissatisfied "Umph!"

"I leave everything to you," added the speaker.

"But I won't have everything left to me," answered the former, impetuously. "The responsibility is awful—more than I can bear. Something dreadful must happen from such unbusiness-like conduct. You are the head of the firm; it is your duty to attend to its interests."

"I cannot," exclaimed the merchant, in a tone so desponding that it startled Peter, and caused him to examine his features, which were pale and care-worn. "Better wind up the affairs of the house at once. We are both rich enough. I am old, and——"

"Nonsense!" interrupted the old clerk, impetuously. "Wind up the affairs! Why, it would be sinful—positively sinful, and take years to do it; first firm in the city. You are ill, Richard," he added. "Something has occurred to hip you. Never mind my grumbling. I am something like your old house dog Ponto—my bark is worse than my bite. Leave everything to me as long as you please; what am I here for? As to your being old, fiddle-de-dee! Why, you are only sixty-two. In the last census I read three deaths over a hundred, and several past ninety."

Mr. Bently faintly smiled.

"I don't wonder at your being unwell," continued the speaker; "been too long out of business, that's it, take my word for it. I feel queer myself if I only miss a day. Follow my advice; better than all the doctors. Go upon 'Change; show yourself. Here are Martineau's bills, Thompson and Patterson's securities. You can't imagine how it will revive you."

"Not to-day, old friend," said the merchant; "not to-day. In a month or two I shall feel stronger—more myself; besides, to-morrow I return to Meldown."

"Ah! there it is," observed Peter Mangles, mournfully. "Meldown—the country! How people contrive to exist in it I can't imagine. No Exchange! no price current! no affairs! It would kill me in a week. Rely upon it that, for health and business, there is no place like London. Look at the beautiful bustle in the city, where every man seems as if he lived for a purpose—had something to do. Only watch," he continued, "the excitement upon 'change, the fluctuations of the market, the rise and fall in the funds; you have nothing like them in the country."

It is impossible to say how long Peter Mangles might have continued in the same strain; for, like many other respectable old gentlemen, once mounted upon his hobby-horse, it was a difficult thing to tire him; but, fortunately for the patience of our readers, the appearance of the junior partner of the firm acted as a damper upon his enthusiasm and loquacity, and caused him to recollect his accounts.

Hopping back to his stool again, the old man left uncle and nephew to enjoy their conversation by themselves.

Mr. Bently coldly touched the hand extended towards him. As he did so, a close observer must have remarked that even that slight courtesy cost him an effort.

"My dear sir," said the hypocrite, trying to look pleased, "I cannot express the happiness I feel at once more seeing you in London. From your long silence, and very brief letters, I feared that you were ill, and more than once have been on the point of running down to Meldown Park."

"I receive no visitors," replied the merchant, drily.

There was an awkward pause in the conversation, during which the scratching of Peter's pen, as he cast up the column of figures before him, became painfully audible.

"Doubtless you will remain in town some time," observed Carus.

"A day only."

"I am sorry to hear it!" exclaimed the nephew, giving way to his ill humor. "For independent of the pleasure it would afford me to see you daily,

your presence would render my position in the firm much more satisfactory."

"Of what do you complain?" demanded his uncle.

Mr. Mangles looked up from his desk: he too felt curious to hear what Carus Kearn had to complain of.

"I have lost your confidence," answered the young man, "and with it all influence in the affairs of the house. It is true your clerk and cashier goes through the form of consulting me, but he invariably acts upon his own judgment, instead of my advice."

"The balance sheet proves that he is right," observed Mr. Bently, drily. "As a man of business I look to results."

"Very right to," mentally ejaculated the clerk. "First sensible thing I have heard fall from him for many a day."

"Then he alone is entrusted with the signature of the firm," added Carus, bitterly.

"It is unnecessary that both should have it," replied the merchant; "it might create confusion. Besides, Peter has proved himself my friend—a true and faithful one, through life. He might have been my partner had he desired it; my procuration has been in his hands for years. I shall not insult him by withdrawing it."

The emphatic tone in which this declaration was made, convinced Carus Kearn that any attempt to shake the resolution of his uncle would be useless; he wisely, therefore, dropped the subject. As for Mangles, who had heard every word, a sudden weakness seemed to have attacked him in the eyes. He rubbed them several times with the cuff of his coat: perhaps he was ashamed to be seen using his handkerchief, and mentally pronounced himself a monster of ingratitude, to have grumbled at a little extra work and responsibility being cast upon his shoulders, which he now felt to be strong as those of Atlas.

"Ah, Richard!" he mentally ejaculated, "had you acted as justly to your daughter's husband as to your old clerk, things would have been very different in Lombard street."

"Peter," said the merchant, as soon as they were once more alone together, "you stick to business too closely."

"Bless me, Mr. Bently!" exclaimed the old man, impatiently; "what else can a man of sense stick to? what would become of the city without it?"

"But we are rich enough."

"It's not the money," replied the clerk, "but the pleasure of making it. How many take delight in dogs and guns, beating through damp woods and covers, trudging over heavy fields, catching dreadful colds, and call it sport? Well, business is my sport—the game I pursue; I couldn't live without it; and, as for toil," he added, "I never knew the meaning of the word till you ceased to share it with me."

His employer, with all his wealth, secretly envied him.

"This cloud, or whatever else you may call it, Richard," continued the speaker, "will soon pass away, and we shall have you in Lombard street again."

"Perhaps," murmured Mr. Bently.

"I say we shall! Don't look so dull, it reminds me of bankruptcy. You shall hear no more complaints from me: only"—here the old man hesitated a little—"if anything should go wrong, remember that I have a great many affairs to attend to, and can't give the necessary consideration to all of them. The exchanges are dreadfully fluctuating, Richard."

"Are they?" answered the head of the firm, mechanically; "I have not followed them lately."

It cost Peter Mangles no slight effort to repress a groan, but he did repress it. The idea of his principal not following the variations of the money market both grieved and astonished him: how could he occupy his time?

From the city Mr. Bently drove to the house of his lawyer, to await the arrival of Richard Hoffman, whom he expected in London that very day. Our hero had completed his education, and had twice, by letter, reminded him of his promise of sending him out to India, to obtain the proofs necessary to clear the fame of his father.

It was this promise that weighed so heavily on the heart of his grandfather; and he resolved, if possible, to tempt him to release him from it. The affection he felt for the son of his offending child, resembled in its growth the ivy planted at the foot of some gnarled oak: at first a very slender tendril, then a solitary leaf appeared, both so delicate and unobtrusive that he had scarcely noticed them; in time they gathered strength; the tendril put forth tendrils still more vigorous, until they completely encircled the trunk, reached to its branches, hiding the scars and seams of age with their ever verdant foliage.

In a word, Mr. Bently lived but in his grandson, and the thought of separation was worse than death to him.

"Is he here?" he eagerly demanded of his friend Morton, as the latter extended his hand to welcome him.

The lawyer with difficulty repressed a smile.

"Not yet," he answered, glancing at the timepiece: "it wants an hour, at least, to the arrival of the train."

"So much," murmured the old man impatiently. "You received my last letter?"

"I did."

"And the project I wrote of——"

"Is feasible," answered the lawyer, "especially from your influence with the government. I perceive but one difficulty—the boy's own consent."

"He will not refuse my offer," said the merchant, in a tone which indicated less confidence than his words expressed.

"You still believe, then, in the omnipotence of wealth?" observed Mr. Morton, sarcastically.

"Experience hourly proves it," replied Mr. Bently. "There is a fascination in gold few natures can withstand: it blinds the judgment, hardens the heart, and fills the brain with intoxicating dreams; it is the idol all worship—some in crime, others in health or happiness, but all with sacrifice."

"You speak learnedly upon this point," said his legal adviser, with a smile.

"Because I have escaped its influence. Time was I looked upon it as the *summum bonum* of existence, and felt an insane pride in the heaps I had hoarded up. Men bowed to it, and, like an idiot, I fancied the homage paid to the possessor, not the thing possessed. I am not the first," he added, with a sigh, "whose heart has been wedded to ashes."

"And yet you wish Richard to become one of these idolmongers," observed the lawyer, reproachfully.

"I would not die—as I have lived—alone!" exclaimed his client, in a tone of deep emotion. "A hireling's hand to close my eyes, their last glance resting on cold, unsympathizing features; I am not all iron, and shrink from the terror of such a deathbed. Not another word," he added; "you cannot change my purpose."

"I shall not obtrude my advice again," replied Mr. Morton, "and yet I cannot help feeling that it is a severe trial to put your grandson to."

"He will yield," answered the merchant.

"Or pass through the ordeal like gold from fire, the purer for the test. But let us change the subject."

"Willingly. Have you made the inquiries I directed respecting my nephew?"

The legal adviser of Mr. Bently opened his private desk, and drew forth a note-book, the pages of which he turned rapidly over, till he came to one closely written.

"Here it is," he said.

"And the result?"

"Listen. Carus Kearn has been in the habit for many years past, of speculating largely on his own account; his losses have been heavy, so heavy that the fortune of his wife, or rather that portion of it which came into his hands, is dissipated.

"The fool," muttered his uncle, bitterly.

"Bills are frequently drawn upon him from India."

"Is that certain?" demanded the merchant, eagerly.

"Curry and Company presented them."

Mr. Bently made a memorandum in his pocket-book.

"And the poison—the——"

"I understand you," interrupted the lawyer, willing to spare his client the pain of alluding more particularly to so distressing a subject. "No means have been left untried. My offers have been most tempting, but failed to shake the old man's resolution. His fears are stronger than his avarice. He declares that he has not the slightest recollection either of the name or person of the party to whom he sold the deadly drug; but I have not given up the hope of tracing it," he added. "The man you directed me to employ has taken a lodging in the neighborhood, and is slowly but securely working himself into his confidence. If once I catch him tripping——"

The conversation was broken off by the sound of a carriage drawing up to the door, and the next minute Mr. Bently had the satisfaction of embracing his grandson.

Mr. Morton could scarcely have recognized in the glowing features, well-knit limbs, and manly bearing of the fine young fellow before him, the pale, terror-stricken boy whom his client had brought a prisoner to his house on the memorable New Year's eve. But Richard remembered him, his kindness and sympathy, as well as the painful circumstances under which they had met, and a slight blush suffused his countenance as he extended his hand to him.

The lawyer shook it heartily as he welcomed him to London.

Our hero pronounced the name of his old schoolfellow, who had quitted Jersey a year previously for Cambridge.

"He arrived last night," said his father, "for the long vacation, and is as impatient as yourself, my dear boy, to meet you. He knows all that it is *necessary he should ever know*," he added; "that you are the grandson of my respected client; although for the present the relationship must remain a secret to the world: he will not betray it."

He rang the bell twice, as he concluded, the signal for his son to make his appearance.

Those who have not forgotten the warmth, the charm of boyhood's friendships, can imagine the pleasure of such a meeting. "Harry!" "Richard!" were the only words that escaped them as they grasped each other by the hand, their eyes glistening with recollections which, even when the hair is gray, and the heart seared with the disappointments of the world, will sometimes startle us by their freshness. We pity, if we don't despise, the cold, harsh nature that can sneer at the feelings and impressions of youth. For our own part, we prize them for their lack of worldliness, their purity and truthfulness; like the flowers of spring, they are the first to adorn the path of life: more brilliant ones may unfold as we advance, but never with equal freshness.

"Your friend will accompany us to Meldown," said Mr. Bently, who had been conversing with Lieutenant Marsh, the gentleman to whom he had confided the task of watching over the safety of his grandson.

"I feared you might find it dull in the country with only my society," he added, with a sigh, "and have persuaded Morton to part with him for a week or two."

"Thank you, sir!" exclaimed our hero, gratefully. "But why lessen the pleasure you have afforded me by an unkind thought? You know I never tire of your society."

The lawyer smiled approvingly.

It was not the words—politeness or policy might have suggested them—but the tone in which they were uttered, and the look of the speaker, that carried conviction of his sincerity to the heart of his grandfather.

"I believe you, my dear boy," he said; "I believe you."

During the journey to St. Faith's, Richard was particularly careful not to wound the susceptibility of his aged relative, whose feelings he divined, by betraying any preference for the society of his friend Harry. If Mr. Bently was weak upon the point, it was the weakness of affection, and the grandson respected it.

As the carriage drew up at the hall on the arrival of the party, which included the lieutenant, a magnificent Newfoundland dog came bounding over the lawn and began caressing the merchant.

"What a noble creature," observed both the young men.

"And faithful as he is intelligent," added his owner; "for weeks, I have frequently had no other companion than Nelson."

Richard repeated the name.

The dog regarded him doubtfully.

"Go to him," said Mr. Bently.

The obedient animal placed his huge fore-paws upon the chest of our hero, looked earnestly into his face and whined; there was no need for any further introduction. From that moment they became friends.

Like most old family mansions, the house at Meldown Park was rich in quaint relics of the past. In the great hall were several suits of mail, which had done their wearers good service during the civil wars; and one more ancient than the rest, known by the name of the Crusader's armor.

There was scarcely a room without some memento of the kind. In one, it was a cabinet, which in its day had contained the papers of a statesman, or the silken robes or jewels of some court beauty, whose portrait still adorned the picture gallery, a long, oak-paneled apartment, running the entire length of the north wing.

This was a favorite spot both with our hero and his friend Harry. Scarcely a morning passed in which the housekeeper had not to leave her more important duties to relate to them the history of one of the family worthies.

But the portrait that most attracted the attention of Richard was a modern one, by Winterhalter, painted with that exquisite truthfulness, and life-like expression which characterizes the productions of the great German master. It had only lately been added to the collection.

It represented a lovely girl, certainly not more than fifteen years of age, with an arch, gipsy-like expression of countenance, and a smile upon the half-open lips, sunny and bright as those which haunt the dreams of youth.

It was the likeness of Alice.

More than once Harry and Lieutenant Marsh, after having hunted the grounds for our hero in vain, had discovered him gazing dreamily on the picture; and, as may be supposed, were not sparing of the badinage usual on such occasions. Morton accused him with being in love with a painting.

"It is the fate of most men," said the lieutenant, with a smile. "Few are caught by real character; and the reason is obvious; it is so rarely that it is permitted to appear. For my part," he added, "it matters very little whether the painting is executed on canvas or upon flesh and blood. The former is less deceptive of the two."

"Cynic!" exclaimed Richard.

"I should have said philosopher," added Harry.

"And both been equally in error," replied the soldier; "for I find too much good in human nature to merit the first appellation, and analyze it too little to lay claim to the last. Like our dreaming friend here, I am content to be pleased I know not why, and care not wherefore."

"I am pleased with the portrait," said Richard; "there is so much frankness in the expression. I wonder if it resembles her."

"I should say it does," observed the lieutenant.

"Then there never was a child less like its parents," exclaimed Morton, pointing to the portraits of Sir Normon and his lady by the same master.

"The likeness, at any rate, is a family one," resumed the former speaker, "and resembles her uncle, Allan Boothroyd, whom I knew in India, where we served in the same regiment. Poor Allan!" he added, with a sigh.

"Was he so unfortunate?" demanded the young man.

"The world doubtless thought him so," answered Lieutenant Marsh; "but dreamers like yourself, Richard, would have pronounced otherwise, for he not only carved his way to rank by his sword—having entered the company's service as a private—but won the affections of one of the most beautiful girls in India, and carried her off from a host of competitors. Their happiness, however, was but short-lived; a malignant fever carried them off within a few days of each other."

"The brother of Sir Norman Boothroyd a private soldier?" observed our hero, with surprise.

"They were brothers in blood, but not in feelings. Whilst a bachelor, the elder brother was simply vain and ignorant, cursed with a ridiculous sense of his own importance. It was reserved for the evil-minded woman he married to complete the corruption of his heart."

As the party quitted the portrait gallery, the two friends could not avoid speculating how the speaker came to be so well acquainted with the private history of the Boothroyds.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

STORMY DAYS.

BY AUGUSTA.

Once I loved a stormy day,
Like this day so wet and dreary
Through its darkness shot a ray,
Making even *darkness* cheery;
And I smiled to see the rain—
Glad that it had come again.

For while sunny days passed on,
Silent still, and all unfeeling,
For the one who sat alone,
Wind and storm were full of healing
When the rain began to pour,
Then my heart was sad no more.

For a spirit smiling came
Through the tempests to my dwelling,
Whispering at my door my name,
Love through all his bosom swelling;
Though a human form he wore,
Stood a spirit at my door.

But, inconstant as the moon,
Now no more when rains are pouring
Doth he greet me—lost too soon,
Deaf to all my soul's imploring.
Now I weep while tempests pour
For mine angel comes no more.

LAZY BERTOL;

OR,

THE SHOEMAKER OF TOURS.

BY CORA BELL.

Eight o'clock at night;—there was a trampling of many feet—the eager rush of an excited crowd in the streets of Tours. It was the close of the Reign of Terror, and the last act of a dreadful drama was about to be enacted, ere the curtain of the Revolution should fall, and the convulsed and heaving elements of society subside into repose. An order of the ferocious Robespierre, *his last order*, was about to be put in execution. It had briefly commanded that the prisons of Tours and those of the surrounding communes should be immediately emptied, and the miserable occupants placed in old boats, in which holes had been previously bored, and left to perish in the Loire. No more blood was to be shed.

Many and terrible scenes had already taken place in Tours and the neighboring towns, in which neither sex nor age, youth or beauty had been spared; and yet the Moloch of slaughter (the fierce passions of a people stung to madness by present misery and the memory of years of tyrannical rule and iron oppression) remained unsatiated and unappeased.

Assembled on a strip of white-shingled beach leading to the river, a wild, disorderly mob, consisting of fish-women, rag-pickers, charcoal-burners, and the lowest rabble of the city, vented, in fierce yells and imprecations, their impatience for the spectacle to commence; for the mayor of the municipality had only sent to the prison to announce to the wretches their doom, and the embarkment was not expected to take place for another hour.

It was a calm, heavenly night in the early summer; the stars glittered out of their pure depths, and the young moon, half buried in clouds, as if hiding her face in sorrow, cast a wan and trembling radiance on the placid waters of the Loire. On the edge of the beach, conspicuous by his hight, which literally towered above the crowd, stood a young man of five or six-and-twenty, dressed in the coarse blouse and leathern apron of an artizan. His eyes were dark and had something dull and dreamy in their expression, as leaning against the edge of the pier, he gazed vacantly into the water; but when he spoke, or replied to the remarks of those around him, they sparkled with a fierce brightness that resembled the lurid flash of the lightning in some tropic storm. It was a strange, haunting face, sallow and meagre, yet with a grave, noble outline of features, to which dark masses of uncombed hair, falling over the broad forehead and mingling with a long beard of the same hue, added more strikingly—a countenance that might have belonged to a Greek slave or a barbaric king, so subtle was the impress of undeveloped intellect and power it bore.

A fierce, wild cry now arose—then the roll of wheels, and the prison tumbrils, those ominous wooden stages painted a fiery red, preceded by gens-d'armes, came thundering on. The prisoners were dragged from the carts, and were collected in huddled groups by the officials.

The brutal yell of "*Death to the aristocrats!*" which had greeted the arrival of the miserable *cortege*, was momentarily hushed as the crowd gazed upon the wan, agonized countenances before them, by one of those strange, magnetic throbs of human sympathy, by which the throng seemed to recognize for one moment the ties of a common humanity and the horror of consigning living, breathing beings like themselves to the chill silence of the watery grave before them.

Life in all its phases was there; old age, tender childhood, the flower of youth; manhood in its prime; lovely women pale and frantic with grief, half led, half dragged along; violent men fettered in gangs, their voices hoarse with cursing, their faces blackened and distorted with passion; others with anguish, passive despair or lofty hope and resignation marked upon their features. There was the haughty noble, reared upon the knee of affluence, and nursed in luxury and sloth, chained wrist to wrist with the vile, hardened felon of the galleys; the trembling nun—the pampered prelate and pale ascetic; beauty and deformity, genius and imbecility, terror-stricken guilt and unshrinking innocence, clad in a motley of rags and rich garments.

One glance at two black, funereal-looking boats moored to the quay, and the unfortunate assemblage saw the nature of their doom. Shrieks and curses rose upon the still night air, but were drowned in the fierce, wild yells of the rabble, whose brutal instincts were again aroused by the slightest symptoms of opposition from their victims.

"Silence, citizens!" said the mayor, (a pursy, consequential-looking man, whose fat face and portly figure might have indicated good nature but for his lowering brows and the crafty expression of his small, twinkling eyes,) "and let the accused hear the order of the Convention." Slowly, torturingly, he unfolded a paper and read, in a dull, monotonous voice, the death-warrant of the unfortunate wretches—"To be drowned in the Loire, but the Convention have left to the good citizens of Tours the privilege of adopting any of the children, and rearing them to some useful trade, and——" A burst of derisive shouts and yells stifled the remainder of the sentence.

"No—no!" shouted a hundred throats. "We'll have none of the cursed aristocrats' cubs. Their fathers starved us, and now that we have killed them, and the baker and the baker's wife, too, shall we bring up their whelps to starve our children?"

The mayor continued, as soon as the tumult had subsided,—"Or if any man here is desirous of a wife, he has leave to choose one from these young women, and——"

A perfect storm of screams, shouts and curses here ensued. The younger portion of the male sex might have been seen pushing forward somewhat anxiously, but the movement was perceived and intercepted almost immediately by a group of fish-women and swarthy country girls, who rushed forward, shouting like maniacs—

"Ho! ho! Who wants a wife? Here we are! *Pardieu*, we will keep our young men. Let them dare to take one of those cursed lily-faces, and we will tear their hearts out!"

Shouting, yelling, striking down all before them, this formidable group of termagants struggled on, with savage energy, until they approached the mayor, who, though surrounded by his officials, literally trembled at their approach. Dashing aside the gens-d'armes, they shook their fists in his face, and threatened to kill him if he spoke another word.

Almost without a struggle, the wretched prisoners suffered themselves to be dragged on board the fatal vessels, destined to be their tombs. Fierce imprecations rang in their ears, stones were hurled, and blows rained heavily; yet, despite of all, some stepped on board as lightly as if they were bound on a pleasure excursion; but the pale moonbeams, as they fell upon their calm and intrepid countenances, revealed the irrepressible scorn of their persecutors that dwelt in every lineament. A slight young girl, about seventeen, with long silken hair of a bright, golden hue, was the last. She staggered over the rough shingles, then stopped for a moment and clung fainting to the arm of the soldier that held her. The man stopped and supported her. Quick as lightning a stout Amazonian fish-woman caught the girl in her arms, and with a fierce shout hurled her into one of the boats, where she fell and lay as if killed by the rude shock.

At this moment the young man whom we have before remarked as leaning against the pier, and who had remained nearly in the same attitude, surveying the scene with a kind of gloomy, listless indifference, sprang to the side of the mayor.

"Citizen," said he, "I am Bertol, the shoemaker; I will take this young girl for a wife."

"*Bah!* Bertol, you are too late," said that functionary, who had not yet recovered from the shock his official dignity had received. "See, she is gone!"

The boat containing the girl had already left the quay. With one bound the man sprang into the water. He disappeared for a moment amid the black waves, but the next saw him on board the boat, shaking like a river-god the streams of water from his huge head and long beard.

He raised the young girl. "Let the child die, my son," said an aged nun; "she is the bride of heaven."

With a fierce imprecation the man loosened her hold. The boat put back a few yards, and the man sprang on shore with his burthen.

Shouts of derisive but good-humored laughter welcomed him from the mob, and even the women seemed rather to enjoy than regret the loss of their swain.

"We do not envy the pale-faced aristocrat. Lazy Bertol will make her work hard for him," shouted a fierce, bronze-visaged virago.

"Ho, ho! ha, ha! Lazy Bertol's got a wife. *Ma foi*, maybe it is Louis Capet's daughter; she has white hair, too," exclaimed another.

"Give her the rope's end if she don't please you," shouted a third.

Utterly regardless of the bitter *badinage* showered unsparingly upon him by the crowd, the young man pressed forward with his light burthen; now and then with a few kicks dispersing the most troublesome of his tormentors. Avoiding the wide and more frequented streets, he pursued his way through by-streets and alleys until he finally entered a long suburb-like street which seemed to lead into the open country.

He stopped abruptly before as mall cottage that stood a little detached from the rest of the houses. Supporting the young girl with one arm, he raised the rude wooden latch and entered. An old woman was seated by the hearth, on which blazed a few logs of wood.

"A light, Margot, and some water," said the man, hurriedly. He pushed with his foot the closed door of an inner apartment, and stooping down, placed his insensible burthen on a low, wooden pallet that stood in a corner. A ray of moonlight gleamed through a small window, and threw a line of light on the pallid face of the young girl. A shuddering aspiration escaped from the man as he gazed on it. He knelt beside the couch, and placed his hand upon her heart. A low cry of joy broke from his lips. He flew to the door.

"Quick, Margot; the water; she lives!"

Muttering and mumbling to herself, the old woman placed the lamp upon a chair, then brought a tin goblet of water. She was gaunt and wild-looking, yet her withered, homely features had a kindly expression that rendered them not unpleasing.

"*Mon Dieu!* Bertol, you are dripping with water. Have you been in the river?" she exclaimed. "And who is this young woman that reminds me of my Rose?"

"She is my wife," he muttered; "yes, mine. I snatched her from the cold waves. But see! She is dying! The fiends have killed her with their blows. Curses on them."

The violet-veined lids, swollen from excessive weeping, were still closed; a blue, livid wale was on one cheek, from which a drop of blood oozed slowly. The small waxen hands were lightly clasped, and the wan face, almost child-like in its innocent beauty, seemed, indeed, sunk in the repose of death. The young man gazed compassionately, as the old woman held up the lamp to take a nearer survey, and those dark, passionate orbs that seemed to flash like the lurid lightning of the storm, now swam with a tender and subdued expression. The great, rough hands trembled like a child's, as he wiped the blood off her cheek with a corner of the coarse coverlid. He knelt down, and gently raising the young girl's head, poured some of the water through her lips. It seemed to revive her. The heavy lids unclosed, and a pair of eyes, blue and seraphic as an angel's, rested on the shoemaker. Bertol gazed one moment, fascinated; then, as if smitten with humiliation by such an effulgence of beauty, he shrank back and gave place to the old woman.

Fierce shouts and yells, with blows upon the door, roused him.

"Bertol! lazy Bertol! are my shoes done?" "Bertol, hast thou finished thy work?" "Ho! Bertol, bring out your pretty wife!"

The shoemaker's face grew fierce and livid with rage. His eyes flashed fire. He sprang into the outer room, and seizing a ponderous club which stood in a corner, he dashed open the cottage door. A mob of the lowest class were round it. Bertol gazed as if to identify his foes.

"Friends, neighbors, begone!" he muttered, in a voice hoarse with rage, but which swelled to the roar of a wild beast. "Begone, I say, and never touch or harm me, or ought that belongs to me, or I swear I will lay every one of you dead at my feet. Begone, wretches! What have I done to you that you should disturb me in my humble home?"

He swung the massive club over his head, and his giant form seemed to dilate with greater magnitude. The fiercest shrunk back with muttered apologies; the rest fled, and in a few moments Bertol was again alone.

He slammed the cottage door. There was no bolt, but he piled a few heavy logs of firewood against it.

The young stranger's eyes were still closed, as if from exhaustion. The old woman was applying some salve to her cheek. Bertol crept behind her, and gazed over her shoulder. The man's savage ferocity had disappeared, but the heaving of his broad chest still showed that his agitation had not subsided.

"Do not go home to-night, Margot," said he, gently. "This poor child seems very ill, and I can do nothing without you."

"She is one of them, I suppose," said Margot, nodding significantly.

"Yes, she was to have been drowned with some fifty others," said Bertol, compressing his lips with a shudder, "and I saved her. God put it into my heart, Margot, for I love this young girl better, a hundred times, than my own life."

"She will make a brave wife, too," was the unsympathizing rejoinder of the old woman. "That little white hand that never baked a loaf yet, looks strong enough to work for a man that's too lazy to work for himself."

"Oh, Margot," said the young man, in humble, deprecating accents, "don't speak that way to me. You know I am not idle, but since my poor mother died I have had no one to love or care for me, so I got not to care for working; it will be different now, if she only lives. I will never be lazy again—never. I seem to have changed into a new man, since I held her in my arms. You will stay with us, good Margot. You say that she is like your daughter Rose. Oh, let her be your daughter. She looks as good as she is beautiful. No, Margot, I will work so hard that this tender and delicate flower may grow bright and flourish, for it does seem to me as if she was formed of different clay to us."

"*Bah!*" said the old woman, bitterly. "She is an aristocrat, and has been daintily fed and cared for; my poor Rose was as handsome to look on before hard work and hunger killed her."

At this moment the young girl opened her eyes. There was something in their soft, dewy lustre, that seemed to deprecate unkindness. The old woman's heart, opened to sympathy by the memory of her own dead child, was forced to utter a few caressing words, but Bertol, as if moved by some strange impulse, shrank timidly back. The young girl put her hand to her forehead. "Oh, I have had such a dream," she murmered. "I thought I was in Heaven. Where am I, good mother?"

That sweet, musical voice seemed to possess a charm for old Margot. "You are safe, my child," said she; "no one shall ever again harm you."

"No, *never*. You are safe as if guarded by angels," burst impetuously from Bertol's lips.

The young stranger turned her head, and met a pair of large, dark eyes fixed on her. There was such a blending of pity, tenderness and respect marked upon that swart, half savage countenance, that she did not withdraw her gaze in terror, as he anticipated. Poor child! Harsh words and imprecations had rung in her ears for so many days, that those words of pity and protection seemed to fall like balm upon her wounded spirit.

"Kind friend, I thank you," said she, extending her hand to him. But for the presence of Margot, Bertol would have kissed those small, rose-tinted fingers, for, rude and savage as he appeared, the whole nature of the man was chivalrous and romantic, the potent touch of love had wakened the slumbering elements of his character, and they had started at once into life and vigor. As it was, he took it, and held it for some moments awkwardly in his great palms.

The young stranger, who did not appear entirely to realize her situation, nor the strange manner in which she had been saved, withdrew her hand slowly, and closed her eyes as if to sleep.

"She is weak, Margot," said Bertol; "it must

be long since she has tasted anything. I will make her some coffee."

"There is none," said the old woman, laconically.

"Have we got a little wine?" asked Bertol, more timidly.

"No. We have got nothing but water," said the old woman. Did I not tell thee at dinner that we had eaten the last morsel of food, and the only drop of wine in the house? and you said you did not care—that when you were hungry you would work."

A groan involuntarily burst from the man's mighty chest. True, he had been as idle and careless as the birds of the air.

Margot continued: "I sent money twice from the door to-day. Dr. Dumont wants his boots, and citizen Gervais has been sending every half hour for his shoes. He called at last himself, and wanted to take them as they were, but I said, Bertol is lazy, to be sure, but then he works like a horse when he does begin, and will do better and neater work in an hour than another of the craft in a day; he will surely do them to-morrow."

"And you said all this for me, good Margot?" said Bertol, humbly. "Fear not, I will do them all to-night; but this poor child is so weak—*mon Dieu!* she will die, after all. Oh! you are right, Margot. It *is* a shame for a strong man like me to be so poor as to have nothing to give another in time of need."

Margot surveyed him with some surprise, as in one or two strides he traversed the little room. The old woman was naturally kind-hearted. She seemed evidently to feel and appreciate that some great change had commenced in the young man, for her face lost much of its sour expression, and her voice was softer when she spoke.

"Well, Bertol, Gervais said he knew you were a good workman, and that if you once promised you would not break your word; so he paid me for the shoes, and said he would trust to your honor."

The shoemaker paused in his walk, and his lips, half hidden in that huge black beard, quivered convulsively.

"God bless him! he is a good man," said he. "I will finish them at once."

"I must go and get something for that little one," said the old woman. "She has put my Rose strangely in my head, but I feel better for it. Bertol, you can kindle up the fire, and put some water on to boil. I will not be long."

Bertol started. He had been thinking of his poverty.

"Yes, Margot," said he, mechanically. He threw one anxious glance upon the bed, barricaded the door, and then threw some logs of wood on the decaying embers, and stooping down fanned them with his breath into a flame. He then poured some water from an earthen pitcher into a little coffee-pot, and put it on the fire. That done, as if unable to restrain the agitation of his mind, he paced with quick and unequal strides up and down the narrow room. Now and then he glanced nervously around, and seemed to take in for the first time the squalor and meanness of his abode. A wooden bench covered with scraps of leather, old shoes, and piles of unfinished work, stood beneath the small lattice casement. An old table, a dilapidated rush chair, and a rough wooden cupboard, containing a few articles of rude delf, was its sole furniture; and even these betrayed a neglect and disorder seldom seen in the dwellings of the very poor.

In one of his walks his eyes fell upon a small, triangular piece of looking-glass stuck against the wall. The shoemaker was a strange being; perhaps he had never gazed into a mirror before, for he started as he looked, and half-fearfully swept back with his hand the dark masses of hair that covered his broad brow, then resuming his walk, he surveyed his hands, his limbs and his coarse clothes. A profound, almost despairing sigh escaped him, he threw himself on a seat beside the fire, and leaning his face on his breast gazed into the flames. He seemed to read strange tales in those crackling and glowing embers, as they gradually mounted into brighter and more vivid flames, tales of hope and promise and awakened energy, for his dark eyes became brighter and more joyous in their expression, his chest heaved, and the muscular hand that lay upon his knee was nervously clasped and unclasped.

The brilliant flames of the pine wood sank lower and lower, yet he still gazed into the red embers, and so deep was his reverie that but for the return of Margot the fire would have gone out.

"Here, Bertol," said the good woman, "I have brought some wine; give the little one a glass."

"Thank you, Margot," said he, starting eagerly up, "I will give it to her while you get the supper."

Kindly, tenderly as a woman, he knelt beside the lowly bed, raised that radiant head, and held the wine to the young girl's lips. She opened her eyes and drank eagerly, as one who had suffered much from weakness and exhaustion.

Sunk in deep thought, yet with a pleased and thankful expression on his countenance, the shoemaker seated himself at his humble supper. He had eaten nothing, as the old woman said, since a scanty dinner, yet the food lay untouched before him; or on a hint from Margot, who watched him in silent surprise, it was bolted in lumps that would have choked an ordinary throat. By-and-by, as the night advanced, Margot came and lay down on the little pallet beside the young stranger. They slept, and as the pale moonbeams gleaming through the little window fell upon their faces, the bronzed, wrinkled visage of the old woman seemed that of some sibyl guarding a youthful Hebe.

In the outer chamber a dim light burned on Bertol's bench; there he sat during the weary hours of the night, while his fingers flew with ceaseless precision and rapidity. The gray dawn of morning struggling through the dusty panes still found him at his task.

The shoemaker did not appear tired, or look paler or more haggard. On the contrary, his eyes glowed with new fire and energy, and a fresher and more youthful expression pervaded his whole being. He heard with evident joy that the young stranger was better. By his directions the old woman carried in her breakfast. He then swallowed a few hasty mouthfuls, and putting his work into an old leather bag, with repeated injunctions to Margot to permit no one to enter until his return, he departed. After the lapse of an hour he returned, bringing a supply of provisions, the unusual quantity and delicacy of which almost surprised Margot out of her wits. Her joy and surprise increased still more, when she saw him again seat himself at his bench, and commence fresh work.

"*Ma foi!* the little one has bewildered him," muttered the old woman. "Only to think of it, Bertol that would not work a stitch if he thought there was only a dry crust in the house."

The young man had indeed amply deserved the soubriquet of lazy Bertol, bestowed on him in derision by his friends and neighbors; for though an admirable workman, either from a natural indolence, which required some powerful stimulus to exertion, or grief caused by the death of a beloved mother, he had never been known of late years to work unless driven by the pressure of extreme want.

Example is everything, and from being overjoyed at Bertol's unwonted industry Margot became industrious herself. She scrubbed and polished away, until the little cottage actually began to look bright and cheery. Money makes changes in the humblest home, and before the young stranger had risen from the bed to which a low nervous fever confined her for several weeks, the shoemaker's little cottage had undergone a complete renovation, so far as cleanliness, bright chintz curtains, neat matting and gayly painted chairs could effect it. Bertol, too, had acquired a habit of steady industry; his patron St. Crispin could not have worked more indefatigably; he seemed suddenly endued with a zeal and patience that were incapable of weariness or fatigue. The invalid, too, was carefully nursed and attended to by old Margot, who had begun to love her gentle charge as if she were indeed her daughter Rosa.

Oh! those weary hours and weeks, how Bertol had counted them, how he longed to behold again that lovely face! for with the reserve and delicacy of true love he had never entered the little chamber since the evening he had rescued her from the waves.

The happy morn at length came; and leaning on old Margot, Ada de Charente came feebly forth. How pale but beautiful she looked! beautiful as some angelic vision of the past, with those long, golden curls floating round her like a silken vail; and those soft blue eyes, in whose fathomless depths purity and loveliness seemed to dwell. She appeared to know the strange terms that had saved her young life, for a bright blush stole over her face as she held out her hand to the young artizan. Tenderly, respectfully as a courtier he took it, for Bertol no longer felt awkward or abashed. During his lonely vigils by night he had deeply pondered the question, forced on him by the beauty and refinement of her he loved; and he felt persuaded that the proffered love of a brave, good man was no insult even to a princess. Still his heart beat tumultuously as he placed her in his mother's old arm-chair beside the fire. She looked so wan and sorrowful what should he say to comfort the young creature, whom he had taken thus strangely under his protection. Perhaps she mourned the loss of friends lost in those days, those terrible days in which he had been an actor, but which memory, with love-illumined eyes, now looked back upon with horror and remorse. Would she not hate him!

But Ada did not leave him long to muse. With the confiding openness of youth she told him her story. She was an orphan, but had been brought up by her uncle, the Marquis de Charente. His was the noblest castle that reared its walls upon the sunny banks of the Loire. There her childhood had passed like a happy dream, until the breaking out of the troubles, when her uncle had gone to Paris, first confiding her to the care of the abbess of a neighboring convent, with directions to take the vail if he did not return. He had been one of the first that had fallen, and she commenced her novitiate. Though she mourned for her good uncle, she gradually grew happy with the sisters and her young companions, who loved her. Her books, her flowers, her birds took up all her time, and she thought of no world beyond those sacred walls. The convent was secluded among spacious grounds, and hitherto had remained unmolested, except by the wild rumors that sometimes reached them, until one terrible morning when wild, infuriated crowds burst through the grounds. She and the greater part of her companions were carried away and thrown into prison. Days and weeks rolled on, and one by one the greater part of their number had been led to execution; the rest were momentarily expecting their doom, when the fatal evening came that they were dragged to the boats.

Bertol felt humbled and abashed as he listened. His was a great but uncultivated soul; from childhood it had burned with an ardent and untamable love of liberty. He had mused and dreamed over the bitter wrongs of the people until his heart had swelled with indignation. He knew that the class that he belonged to had for centuries groaned under the iron yoke of a proud, selfish aristocracy; and that not until gaunt famine had penetrated through every hut and hamlet of once happy France—until the child died on its mother's breast, and the strong man bowed down and withered in his prime—did they rise and avenge their woes. He deplored now the deeds of cruelty and violence which had been committed in the madness of the hour; yet still he stood convinced of the righteousness of their cause. But this poor child—how should he tell her this—how atone to her for all that she had lost? Oh, that she would love him—he would be to her father, lover, husband—his life would be devoted to her!

For a moment the young artizan stood stupified, embarrassed—the next, with kindling eye and burning cheek, he knelt beside the young orphan, and with wild, impassioned words poured forth the passion of his soul. She did not seem grieved or indignant—Ada was no proud beauty, but one of those gentle, seraphic beings who seem formed to bless man. For days, too, she had heard his praise from old Margot's lips; and she was glad to find in that brave heart an ark of rest. Gratefully she thanked the young man for saving her life, and with tender, loving words promised to be his wife.

Tears of joy literally rained from Bertol's eyes as he pressed that fair young head to his manly breast. He could not believe his happiness. Love, such love as only visits deep and passionate natures, had taken deep root in his heart; yet he had mentally vowed, if the young stranger could not love him, he would let her go free, and endeavor to provide her with a safe asylum in another land.

Bertol and Ada were united. The fair and delicately nurtured child of aristocracy made a meek and loving partner. The young artizan, almost unconsciously, possessed a thirst for knowledge; and the companionship of his refined and beautiful wife gradually awakened his latent powers. Many an hour of the long winter evenings were now devoted to study. Ada guided those coarse fingers to write with fluency and ease. His energy and persevering industry, too, were crowned with success; he gradually increased in wealth, and in the lapse of a few years he was enabled to open a large manufactory, which gave employment to hundreds. They lived in humble happiness during the first years of the Consulate; but on the anniversary of the fifteeth year of their marriage, Bertol presented his wife with the title deeds of the princely estate of her uncle, the Marquis de Charente, which he had purchased as a gift for her. Ada removed to the home of her childhood, within whose stately walls sprung up the children of the shoemaker of Tours—a blooming and happy family—who still flourish on the banks of the Loire.

To the Girls.—Flirtation, whether seriously or lightly considered, is injurious to a woman, as well as exceedingly unbecoming in her. It is a broad, unblushing confession, which the individual makes of her desire to attract the notice of men. Avoid it, then, altogether.

I SAW THEE IN MY DREAM.

BY KITTY D.

Last night I saw thee in my dream, beloved,
And, oh! how kindly thou didst talk to me.
The frown no longer rested on thy brow;
The ice had melted, love's sweet streams ran free.

That blessed vision eased the wearing pain
That for so many days had grieved my breast;
And new-born hopes quick lifted up their heads,
Stirring like young birds weary of the nest.

And now I hold thy letter to my breast;
It came ere this good day had reached its noon,
Causing my heart to leap with happiness,
Hoping that other joys would greet me soon.

THE THREE HOMES;

OR,

THE GOVERNESS'S BROTHER.

We were poor and proud.

I can just remember the time when the blow fell (though I was too young to realize its significance) that demolished my father's fortune, and reduced us all to the long, hand-to-hand struggle of Poverty and Pride. I grew up in daily cognizance of the thousand shifts and shams by which we strove to hide the barrenness of our resources, and sought to appear as if ample means were still in our possession. I daily listened to falsehoods from my mother's lips, heard false words, and saw falser smiles that never reached her eyes, which I remember always cold, greedy, glittering and unbeautiful in expression, as they were lovely in form and color.

I saw the frown upon my father's brow, and heard his bitter reproaches, whenever, by chance or intent, our meagre fare was increased by some unwonted luxury, our fires burned too brightly, or the house bills came in heavier than usual. And yet when guests were with us, he was the courtly man of the world, smiling, gay, and profuse in his proffers of hospitality, sparing neither larder nor wine-cellar, though himself and family were afterward pinched for necessaries until the cost of these luxuries was replaced.

While we were children, these things made little impression upon us; but as we grew up to man's and woman's estate—my brother and myself—we constantly rebelled against the petty tyrannies, the privations that bought our hollow splendor, and the thousand tricks and falsehoods which, even if we took no active part in them, lay heavy on our consciences, because we were forced to consent to them in silence.

I shall never forget the flush of indignation that would sometimes rise over my brother's white brow when our parents were more than usually pretentious. I shall never forget the untold agonies I have suffered, lest our visitors should discover the hollowness of my mother's bland courtesies. I sometimes think that, had I known, as I know now, that she was perfectly understood, and that our best friends, by profession, often amused themselves in trying to draw her out, I should have died with shame. Ah, well! death would have come welcomely more than once in the course of those miserable years! Yet I have learned to be grateful and bless God since, for the prolonged life that, with a few joys, has been so full of suffering!

It was in such a home as this that we passed our childhood, and approached adult age. I, however, was only entering my teens when my brother went away.

A distant relative—in pity for the boy, I believe, more than from any desire to aid my father, whom he must have despised—offered to provide for my brother's education and establishment in life. So Frederick went away, never to return to us again as an inmate, and only at rare intervals as a guest.

Several years passed away. Through much scheming and manœuvering I had received a tolerable education, superficial and showy enough, but far better than the utter lack of culture which might have been mine, had not my mother looked upon the hardly saved sums expended for this purpose as an investment likely to bring large returns when I should be brought into the matrimonial market.

The years devoted to study were monotonous, but peaceful. I lived apart from the family with my governess, a young lady whom, because, on account of an incurable disease, was unable to procure any other situation, my mother had taken into our home out of what she called *charity*.

It grieves me to speak thus of her to whom I owe my life; but the efforts of poor Emily Laning were but ill repaid by the scanty food obtained from our table, and the meagre sums that served scarcely to supply her simple wardrobe. Few servants, in fact, would have been content with the wages my mother averred that she thought quite sufficient for all Emily's weary hours of toil. But Emily never complained, and I believe she was thankful for a refuge, and that my affection soothed many an hour of pain, and smoothed the slow, gradual path that led onward toward her grave. For she died in my arms, and with bitterness of spirit that was utterly incredulous of any balm, I lamented her, as next to my darling brother, my truest friend, and the only person who had shed brightness upon my wretched home since Frederick left its roof.

When she was gone I felt bereaved and desolate, and for days, that lengthened into weeks, I refused to be comforted. Nevertheless, there was one hope springing up freshly, though almost unacknowledged, in my heart—one blessed hope which, like all that made my life endurable, I felt that I owed to her. And yet its fruition seemed very, very distant.

While Emily Laning lived with us, she was, from time to time, visited by her brother Charles. This brother, her sole remaining relative, Emily loved with an intensity of affection almost painful to witness in one so frail and feeble. She welcomed him with transports of delight that cost her hours of pain and suffering in their re-action upon her disordered nerves; and when he left her, each time a portion of her life, her very vital essence, seemed to accompany him, either exhausted by her sorrow, or borne along with the anxious tenderness of the thoughts that followed his career.

Charles Laning was worthy even of this devotion—the chief earthly regard of one of the purest, most angelic of beings, all of whose emotions seemed sublimated and refined by suffering. He was brave, strong, handsome, proud, noble—as near perfection as mortal ever comes. So believed Emily, and so another, hearing his praises from a fond sister's lips, looking upon his splendid manly beauty, knowing how valiantly he maintained his protracted hand-to-hand struggle with adverse fortune, learned early to believe.

Charles Laning was poor, and, with the world all before him, had yet to win, in the unpitying struggle of life, name and fortune. That he would do this neither Emily nor myself doubted. And we often sat, with our hands clasped in his, and listened to the recital of his hopes and efforts, the sister's pale face glowing with all her earnest love, mine, I know, reflecting every passing emotion depicted upon his handsome features.

Those were very happy hours, that occurred at rare intervals during the years of Emily's sojourn with us, and I prized them only less than she. My mother, absorbed in her schemes and plans, had apparently never dreamed of danger to me from the visits of Charles Laning. And while I lived surrounded by the golden-hued atmosphere of youthful love, she was restlessly planning to secure for me an unexceptionable husband, on my entrance into society.

I was nearly eighteen on the occasion of Charles Laning's last visit. My birth-night was to be signalized by a ball, that was to introduce me into society, and my mother had long been absorbed in the preparations for this event, which required finesse and talent enough to furnish a first-rate diplomat, or cabinet minister, and I was left unusually to myself.

Nevertheless I was for once wanted while Charles Laning was with us. We sat—Emily, Charles, and myself—beside the little fire in the apartment which was our school and sitting-room—sat with clasped hands, listening and speaking as such friends will, after long absence. Emily's head rested upon her brother's breast, I sat on a low stool at his feet, and leaned upon his knee—the hand that had stolen round Emily's waist clasped mine, the other rested caressingly upon my head, as he looked down into my face, speaking with his eyes love-tales that his proud lips would not utter, reading in return, perhaps, all he wished to know, for words had never syllabled our hearts' secret, when my mother suddenly threw open the door, and stood regarding us—surprise, anger, contempt, all visible in her pinched and haughty features.

No thought of wrong had ever sullied the purity of my intercourse with Charles Laning until that moment. I blushed then, not in shame of any act or feeling of my own, but of my mother's ungenerous suspicions. Completely overwhelmed, I submitted to be led from the room to my own apartment. I heard words of scorn and anger, I felt myself thrust violently upon the bed, then I was alone.

My mother turned the key in the lock, and the next moment I heard her voice, loud and angry, from the room where the brother and sister still remained. Presently Charles Laning came forth. As he passed my door I heard him say:

"You will not visit any unconscious wrong of mine upon the head of my innocent sister, I trust, madam. If I have erred in my silent love of Alice, it was surely no fault of hers. If I had a home I would instantly remove her to it, but poverty compels me to permit her stay for the present beneath the roof where my honor has been doubted; but you may rest assured that not even her presence could induce me to come again beneath its shelter."

I could fancy his proud look as he said this, and my mother's shifting glances, as his eye rested upon the face where mean thoughts had left so many traces. She made no reply, and Charles passed rapidly on. I heard his tread upon the stairs, the clang of the outer door, and then I sprang to the window, and looked down upon the gravel walk, along which his tall figure was rapidly retreating.

Once only he turned, and gazed for a moment at the windows of the house. He saw me, waved his handkerchief in adieu, lifted his hat, and then turned away. Years passed before I saw him again.

A month later I received Emily's dying breath. The shock of her brother's dismissal had exhausted her little strength, and had my mother intended to send her away, she could not have done so, for, from that day, she never left the bed upon which, four weeks later, she breathed her last. My mother had forbidden all communication with Charles Laning, but I sent him Emily's dying messages, together with the few lines penned by her trembling hand. After the letter was sent I told my mother, for I would not do anything secretly, though I had not hesitated to disobey in this one instance. When his answer came, thanking me for all my care, and, guarded as it was, showing how dear I was even in his hours of desolation, I showed it to my mother. She said nothing, which was wise, perhaps, in her sense of worldly wisdom, for I might easily have been induced by opposition to a continuance of the correspondence. But for years this was our last communication.

My mother dragged me on an endless round of gayeties. We often had company in the house, and often went on long visits to our neighbors and distant acquaintances. So much of our life as could be hidden from the observation of others was meagre, mean, comfortless; that which passed in public if not splendid was luxurious. Sometimes my detestation of the artifices and subterfuges of this life of ours broke all bounds. I would say bitter, scornful words to my parents, receive taunts and reproaches in return, and then, almost wishing to die, almost envying Emily's calm, dreamless sleep beneath the green church-yard mound, I would rush away to weep out my shame and agony in the solitude of my own room, or in the silent woods that skirted my father's domain. Only a proud, frank spirit like my own can imagine what I suffered.

At length the suitor my mother had so long sought was found. I received my instructions, and, inwardly rebelling, was paraded before him, along with a half score of debutantes, and elderly young ladies, in a country house where we *chanced* to have been invited, to meet him, as I have no doubt.

Mr. Marston was a plain, spare man of forty, a bachelor and immensely rich—in short, "a great catch," in the opinion of many others beside my mother. He was flattered, feted, caressed *ad nauseam*, and I fancy liked me solely because I persisted in treating him with scornful indifference. This may sound paradoxical, but he could, at least, have no doubt of my sincerity, and that, even in the form in which it displayed itself, must have been refreshing to him, who knew himself to be pursued for his money solely.

I did not dislike Mr. Marston on acquaintance. On the contrary, his good sense, his admirable culture, his animated descriptions of countries he had seen, interested me greatly, and I became fond of his conversation. When, however, he proposed marriage to me, I refused, for my heart owned no other master than Charles Laning.

My mother fell into a paroxysm of rage on hearing this. Bitterly she reproached me with the sacrifices she had made to secure my suitable establishment in life, and scornfully she taunted me with my love for Charles Laning—a "driveling, poverty-stricken clerk," a man who, "aided and abetted by the sister who subsisted on charity, would have lured me to my ruin."

And I was forced to listen to this with only such answer as my trust in him enabled me to make. Of his honor I had no proof beyond my own instinctive knowledge of it.

I shall not detail the persecutions that followed, and drove me nearly frantic. Frederick had gone on a long tour through Europe and the East. I had no friend to whom I could appeal, and at last, when Mr. Marston again offered himself, I accepted him. I was sure of his love. I knew him to be a man of fastidious honor, of great refinement, and believed that life with him would be infinitely preferable to that I was forced to lead beneath the roof of my parents.

God forgive me for the wrong I did a loving heart! I perjured myself at the altar; and gave but the outer semblance of duty for the love I promised! And he learned it all too soon, a knowledge that traced deep lines upon his brow, and threaded his dark locks with silver. He was in the prime and vigor of life when I became his wife, yet in less than two years he was changed to an old man, feeble and decrepid, and I was the cause!

I strove very hard to do rightly, to let the most dutiful care and attention to all his wishes take the place of the love I could not give. But his heart refused to be satisfied with this, and yet no word, or look of reproach ever accused me as the destroyer of his happiness.

We lived in the city which, for years, had been the home of Charles Laning, who was now rapidly rising into eminence as a writer, and we often met him in society. I think my husband detected something of the feelings that I smothered, but could not quite repress. He had heard from my own lips of my early connection with the young author, and often heard us converse of the dead girl whom we had both so fondly loved. But he manifested no jealousy, nor showed any want of trust in wife or friend; yet I doubt not now, the iron entered his soul when he saw us meet with as much of the ancient demonstration of regard as befitted our altered relations. I believe from that time he longed for death to remove him—the only obstacle to the happiness of her whom he loved so well that life itself were not too great a sacrifice for her sake.

He fell ill. Through all his lingering, mortal sickness I nursed him tenderly, and truly; in those fearful hours of patiently-borne suffering, I learned to love him better than ever before. I loathed the society to which before I had flown as a refuge from my unhappiness. Our splendid house was closed, silence reigned in the magnificent drawing-rooms, and lofty halls over whose tesselated floors no sound of footfall echoed. Only in the servants' rooms, and in the apartments of the invalid, were there the sounds of human habitation. I saw no one, not even the friend of my youth, but in solitude awaited the coming of the Destroyer. Conscience assailed me with bitter pangs that I had returned coldness for the love of him who lay dying, and forever thundered "perjurer!" and "false wife!" within my ear. In my early home I had been miserable, but I was not less so amid the splendors I had purchased by false vows.

At length I was free. The eyes that had only looked on me with love were closed forever. The splendid funeral had gone from my door, and the rich man had been laid beneath the marble for once truthful in its tale of human virtues. I was alone, and mistress of all that had been his.

I could not, would not make a pretence of vain grief for the dead. But my morbid dislike of society, my reproachful conscience, my bitter self-accusations drove me from the haunts of my kind. Obstinately refusing to see any but my man of business, I remained only till necessary forms had been complied with, and then fled to the solitude I had chosen.

Three years passed before I returned to the city. I came back a wiser, and I trust, a better woman, calmer, more hopeful, better disciplined, with a firmer religious faith. I had found peace and rest in solitude, and a solution of many of my doubts in the conversation of the excellent clergyman whose family had been my sole associates during my retreat.

My home was again opened, and I re-entered the society that, with open arms, welcomed the wealthy young widow. My brother Frederick and his youthful foreign wife I invited to become my inmates. Only for them I should have been quite alone. My parents had closed their long life of scheming and shallow deceptions, and had gone to the world where rich and poor meet without distinction.

Charles Laning, now a world-famous man, held himself quite aloof from me. Perhaps my abrupt disruption of our intercourse, previous to my husband's death, had offended him. Perhaps he dared not approach the rich widow, lest, like the crowd of flatterers who bent before me, he should be accused of selfish motives. For he had grown richer in fame than in money, and, after all his labors, enjoyed only a modest competence.

I need not tell how the long silence of years was at length broken. It seemed to us that chance only caused our long separated lives to mingle, but a hand we could not see might have guided our feet into the path that henceforth our united lives shall follow. Men said that he had borne off the prize, and envied him, perchance, the golden hoards my hand bestowed; but I knew, and every succeeding day has convinced me still more fully, that the heart thus regained was to him more precious than aught else I had to bestow.

We have been very happy. I am proud of my husband's fame, and he is proud of what he styles my beauty. In summer we dwell in our best beloved home, the cottage we have built near Emily's burial place. The green mound that covers her last resting-place, with the slender white shaft that points skyward above it, is the shrine of many a loving memory, and the altar at which we renew our ever-living affection.

The last of my three homes with its simple comforts, with its blessed atmosphere of love and peace, is my haven of rest—my true home, where neither care nor fear intrudes,—there is no shadow of poverty, nor gleam of splendor; but only modest luxury and a shutting out of the strifes and struggles of the great world, which while there we forget, or remember only with pity, that all who compose it are not happy as ourselves.

RULES OF CONDUCT.

Adhere most scrupulously to truth, and labor to preserve the strictest integrity, simplicity, and sincerity.

Strive to be as kind, forbearing, and forgiving, as you can, both to friends and foes.

Never speak evil of any one, on any pretence whatever.

Strive to recommend religion by the courtesy, civility, and condescending character of your conduct.

Mortify lusts, sensuality, and sloth.

Shut out evil imaginations and angry thoughts.

FORGIVENESS.

The brave only know how to forgive; it is the most refined and generous pitch of virtue human nature can arrive at. Cowards have done good and kind actions—cowards have even fought, nay, sometimes conquered; but a coward never forgave; it is not in his nature; the power of doing it flows only from a strength and greatness of soul conscious of its own force and security, and above all the little temptations of resenting every fruitless attempt to interrupt its happiness.

SHE CAME IN TEARS.

BY WILLIE E. PABOR.

The Spring came in with face in tears,
As if she wept this truth to know
This year was one beyond the years
Of earth, for mortal care and wo.

There had been more of blight than bloom;
There had been less of bliss than bane;
And grief had left but little room
For pleasure's light and joyous strain.

She came in tears; she saw the lands
O'er which her mission was to reign,
In sackcloth; and she laid her hands
On us as on a child in pain.

She soothed us with the hope she kept,
Of better, brighter days to come;
Of promises that long had slept
When we in sorrow had been dumb.

She led us out beyond the shade,
To where the pleasant sunshine lay
On Life's broad plain, and then she bade
Our footsteps tread that shining way.

She came in tears; but since she wept
For us, we yield to her the hand
We have so long reluctant kept,
And she shall lead us through the land.

She came in tears; we take the sign
In promise for the smiles to come;
The rain precedes the clear sunshine,
And joy shall fill each saddened home.

THE BATTLE OF LEXINGTON.

A REVOLUTIONARY REMINISCENCE.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

The following story was told, a number of years ago, by an old Revolutionary soldier, to his children and grandchildren, as they sat around the festive board of a Thanksgiving dinner. The writer, then quite a youth, was present—though not as a relative—and heard it, and treasured it up in his memory, and now gives it to the public, as nearly as he can remember, in the language of the veteran, suppressing only the names of the parties introduced, which for various reasons he does not wish here to state.

The 19th of April, 1775, (began the aged narrator,) was a day long to be remembered, not only by myself, but by all who take a pride in our glorious institutions. The ever-to-be-remembered morning dawned bright and beautiful, the sun rising in calm glory, as if it were not to witness the bloody opening of that great drama, upon which the eyes of the whole civilized world were instinctively turned, and whose closing scenes have left us a free and independent nation.

I was at that time about two-and-twenty years of age, and was in the employ of Mr. S****, of Lincoln, as a farm-hand. I had gone down to the field alone, about the usual hour; but had not been there long, when Mr. S**** came hurrying down, and in an excited tone, said:

"David, there are great things going on; and the time has now arrived when we must either take a bold stand and defend our rights with our lives, or tamely submit like cowards to British oppression."

I asked him what he meant, and he replied:

"A messenger has just passed by here, on his way to alarm the country, who says that a large body of British troops, on their march from Boston to Concord, passed through Lexington early this morning, and, without provocation, fired upon the militia and citizens, killing and wounding quite a number."

He further said that great alarm prevailed throughout the country round about—that the bells had been rung and the drums beat to arms—that men were everywhere leaving their work and hurrying to the field of action, and asked me if I was willing to take a part in the coming struggle.

"Yes," I replied; "if matters have come to such a pass, I would rather be on the field of battle than here."

"Then quit your work at once," he said; "take your gun, and go and do your duty; for if you feel as I do, you would much rather die a freeman than live a slave."

Accordingly I left the field, and hurried to the house, where I equipped myself as well as I could, only being delayed some half an hour in running a few extra bullets, my powderhorn having fortunately been filled a few days before. Then putting up some provisions, for I did not know when I should return, I bade Mr. S**** and his family good-bye, and told them, if they never saw me again, I hoped at least they would hear a good account of me.

I had not gone far, when I met a horseman riding at full speed. I asked him the news, and he sung out, without stopping his horse:

"A large body of British troops, after shooting down several men in Lexington, have marched upon Concord, to destroy the town. Hurry on, for every man is wanted!"

He said something more, but this was all I caught—for his horse, being on the run, had carried him beyond my hearing.

I then struck across the fields to the Concord road, running most of the way; and when I came in sight of the road, I saw many persons hurrying up from every direction, each man bringing with him his gun and whatever else he thought needful—sometimes alone like myself, but mostly in parties of two, three, and four—seldom more.

Soon after I got into the Concord road, I met a couple of men, partly uniformed, hurrying towards Lexington. I stopped and asked them the news; and one replied, very excitedly:

"Dreadful times, friend! dreadful times! A large body of British infantry and grenadiers have marched on to Concord to destroy the place, which they are doing at this minute."

"Then why are you not there to defend it?" inquired I.

"Because the citizens and militia are at present too few to cope with the British; and we, with many others, have been dispatched by Colonel B****, to act as scouts, alarm the country, and get full reports of the doings below."

I then asked them if they thought I could be of any service at Concord; and they answered that I had better go and see for myself; but that everybody was greatly alarmed, and so far there was no unity of action.

After this I did not hurry as before, but walked on quickly, keeping a sharp look-out, and wondering to myself how the affair was going to terminate. Not thinking it exactly prudent to approach the village by the road, and not caring to be mixed up with other parties, I once more turned off into the fields, and taking a kind of roundabout course, ascended some high ground, whence I could get a partial view of the place, and form some idea of what was going on.

It was little I could see, however, save a dense smoke rising from the center of the place, and here and there a glimpse of British soldiers, and some of our own volunteers, as they marched in companies to take different positions. In an open lot, just back of the village, stood quite a collection of women and children; and on what now is called Burying-ground Hill, were a number of British officers, apparently surveying the place through their glasses; while, from every direction, I could see citizens hurrying up, but more in bodies than before, to join their countrymen, and, if necessary, assist in repelling the invaders.

As I thus stood looking, I heard the report of guns, but apparently only some three or four. Next I heard a single discharge, and then what appeared to be a volley. This was followed by loud cries, and another volley, and for a few minutes by rapid and continual discharges, by which I knew that an action had fairly commenced on both sides.

While I stood hesitating, not knowing in what manner it was best for me to act, the firing ceased; and soon after, to my great joy, I saw the head of the column of British infantry filing down the road.

I now hurried round to the rear of the evacuating forces, and, on entering the village, found some hundreds of our men collected on the common, almost without order, companies apparently being disbanded, and the greatest excitement and indignation prevailing. Some half a dozen or more had been killed and wounded on both sides, and a considerable amount of property had been destroyed by the enemy; but the latter, having suddenly become alarmed at the determined action and the rapidly increasing numbers of the citizens, had beat a full retreat, leaving two of their dead where they had fallen, and were now filing down the road in fine military order, with strong flanking parties thrown out on either side, their splendid uniforms and burnished arms glittering in the bright sunshine, and making an imposing show.

But thinking only of their dastardly and wanton acts, and that they were only vulnerable men like themselves, the excited crowd speedily resolved to follow and harrass them.

"Let us have revenge!" cried one: "revenge for our comrades shot down in cold blood!"

"Aye, let us follow and shoot them down in the same way!" exclaimed another.

"Who is to lead us?" asked a third.

"We want no leader!" shouted a fourth. "Let every man do his duty by himself, and shoot the scoundrels wherever he can reach them."

With this the people set up a wild shout of approval; and immediately the crowd began to scatter, most of them taking the direction of the retreating army, I following with the majority.

On coming up within bullet range of the rear guard, we opened upon them a general fire, and saw some five or six of them drop from the ranks. They immediately replied with a volley, hitting four of our party and killing two, one of whom fell dead beside me. Upon this we immediately scattered, leaping the fences and taking to the fields, each man acting for himself. Loading my gun, I ran forward; and getting under cover of some bushes, I selected my man, and fired again—the others generally acting in the same manner.

Thus, without concert, and without any regular leader, we began a mode of warfare best suited to our circumstances and condition; and which, during that long, hot day—and it was uncommonly hot for the season—cost many a soldier, the very flower of the British army, his life.

I shall make no attempt to give you a detailed account of that day's fight; in fact, I do not think I could if I would; for I am getting well advanced in years now, and my memory is beginning to fail me. Indeed, so far as I was concerned, it would only be a repetition of loading, getting a new position, firing, and keeping out of the way of the flanking parties—which did all in their power to protect the main body—running down, shooting, and bayonetting the provincials wherever they could. Our men completely lined the way of the retreating army—fired from every bush, house, fence, or covert, and even the open fields—and sometimes maintained a running fight, where the harrassed enemy had a good opportunity for pursuit.

From being in the rear, I gradually made my way beyond the head of the advanced column; and having secreted myself behind a large rock, I was waiting for them to come up to a certain aim, when suddenly two soldiers, who had been thrown forward as scouts, approached me unperceived. The first intimation I had of their presence were two shots, fired at a distance of less than twenty yards, one ball passing through my hat, and the other through the fleshy part of my left arm, the scar of which I still retain.

By the time I had got upon my feet, they were in the act of rushing upon me with their bayonets, one a couple of feet or so in advance of the other. There was no time to be lost; and taking a rapid sight at the foremost, I pulled the trigger; but from some cause, my gun for the first time that day missed fire.

I was now so situated, with the rock behind me, that it was impossible for me to escape; and as my foes came bounding forward, with loud yells and bitter curses, I thought my last hour had come. As quick as lightning I cocked my gun again, and again pulled the trigger, with the muzzle almost touching the breast of the nearest.

This time, thank heaven! the piece did its duty, and lodged the contents in the very heart of my foe, who fell back dead, without even a groan. The next moment the bayonet of his companion passed through my side, with so much force as to drive me back against the rock, inflicting a severe and dangerous wound, and holding me completely in his power.

For a few moments I struggled to extricate myself, but rapidly grew weak and faint, when, finding me sinking to the earth, the soldier withdrew his weapon, and made another quick thrust. In his haste, he missed me nearly altogether, but passed his bayonet through my clothes, where it became momentarily entangled.

Throwing down my gun and seizing his, I now feebly attempted to foil his fell intent; but being the stronger of the two, and himself unwounded, he fairly tore the weapon from my grasp; and another moment would certainly have been my last, had not kind Providence come to my aid.

As, fairly foaming with wrath, he drew back for the fatal lunge, a bullet passed through his head, and he fell dead at my very side. I had only time to see a friendly form hurrying up to me, when I fainted and knew no more.

When I recovered consciousness, I found myself lying upon a bed, in the house of a Samaritan, and learned that the British had been met at Lexington by a large reinforcement, and had effected their retreat to Charlestown, being followed to the very Neck by some of our men, and suffering continual losses all the way.

I also learned that my good host was the friend who had so providentially come to my rescue. Being a little distance behind me, he had heard the firing, and had hurried up just in time to save me. Taking up my apparently lifeless form, he had borne me back and secreted me in some bushes, standing guard by me till the enemy had passed; and then, with the aid of some friends, had carried me to his own house, about half a mile distant.

Here, under the best of care, I remained for several weeks; and just as I had once more begun to get abroad in the fresh air, news came of the glorious battle of Bunker's Hill, and filled me with new vigor and life. A few days after, though still far from complete recovery, I joined the army at Cambridge, and once more took an active part in that great and righteous contest, whose glorious results, my children, we all now enjoy.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Clericus.—We cannot say positively whether or not London was founded by the Romans, as historians differ on this point. It is first mentioned as a Roman settlement in the reign of Nero, A. D. 61, when it was the residence of a great many rich merchants and dealers. Long before this, however, it was a village of the Belgic Britons. It was built in a wood, fortified with ramparts and ditches; hence its name, *Lund*, or "the wood," and *Lunduym*, "the fortified wood, or hill." London, or a great portion of it, has been burned down again and again. It was first burned by the undisciplined forces of the valiant but barbarous queen, Boadicea, A. D. 64. It was subsequently burned several times by the Danes and other marauders, prior to the reign of Alfred the Great. During the reign of William the Conqueror, in the year 1077, a fire broke out which laid nearly the whole city in ashes. In 1086 another dreadful conflagration swept over the city, which destroyed not only the best and most opulent part, but consumed likewise the old Cathedral of St. Paul's. On the second of September, 1666, broke out what is known as "the great fire," which raged with great fury for five days, consumed the magnificent cathedral of St. Paul's, above a hundred churches, many palaces and public buildings, and over thirteen thousand houses. The value of the property destroyed by this fire was over forty millions of dollars. The city is now about six miles wide and twelve miles long, and its circumference is nearly forty miles.

An Unhappy Son says his mother is acquiring habits of intoxication, and that often when he returns home at night he finds her under the baleful influence of rum. He has three small brothers and a baby sister, and is exceedingly alarmed at the prospect of his mother's becoming a drunkard. His father and himself have done all they can to wean her from this habit, but she grows worse and worse, and he wants to know what can be done in this terrible emergency. We can give you no advice that will be of practical value. If your mother's love for her husband and her children, and her own self-respect and moral principle will not keep her from rushing voluntarily into a drunkard's grave, we do not know what will avail to save her from such a terrible fate.

Anglo-Saxon.—Your teacher is greatly mistaken if he supposes that the English language, as at present spoken and written, at all resembles the old Saxon, or *is* the old Saxon. It is a combination of many languages. First, were the old Belgic-British dialects, the Gaelic and the Celtic; then the Latin introduced under the Roman dominion; then the Saxon; then the Danish; then Norman French introduced after the Conquest; and since that time thousands of Latin, Greek, German, French, Spanish and Italian words and phrases, and words borrowed from Asiatic and African languages and dialects, introduced to meet the necessities of law, physic, divinity, art, science, literature, invention, discovery, geography, &c., &c.

A. D. writes us from Memphis, Tenn., that he has to pay ten cents a copy for the Ledger, which price he considers an imposition. We think so, too; and we also think that A. D. and others who are charged such an outrageous price for the Ledger had better subscribe for it, and have it sent direct from this office. We make a practice of refusing to take subscriptions from persons living in places where there are news offices; but when dealers attempt to impose upon the admirers of the Ledger, and strive to limit its circulation by such gross overcharges, we consider it our duty to our friends and to ourselves to rebuke their rapacity.

A Young Husband wants to know if his wife is justified in wearing her *first* husband's miniature, along with his own, in a double-locket breast-pin? We think she *would* be justified in doing so. A man who is capable of feeling annoyed at such an innocent act, or of feeling jealous at any indication of affectionate remembrance of a former husband, should never marry a widow. The same remark will apply to ladies who think of marrying widowers.

Nineteen.—Your father has a right to forbid your wandering about the city on Sunday evenings, smoking and drinking, and "looking in wherever there is anything going on." A boy of your age and education should be ashamed of spending his Sabbath evenings in such a vulgar, idle and vagabond manner. Why do you not prefer to behave like a fully civilized and enlightened being?

Jacksonville.—If you are very anxious to obtain and pay for the young lady's miniature, you might invite her to call with you at a daguerreotype saloon, and have a couple of pictures of each of you taken, you giving her a set and keeping the other yourself; and then you could of course pay for them without seeming impertinent, and run no risk of offending the young lady's sensitiveness.

Q. N.—Yes, where a correspondence between a young lady and gentleman has been forbidden by the former's parents, and the latter returns her letters by request, etiquette demands that the young lady should return the gentleman's letters whether he requests her to do so or not, and so would a due sense of propriety.

Dandy Jim.—We should *not* advise you "to go into the negro minstrelsy business"—at least not until you are positively certain that you cannot get a living in the character of a white man.

Felix.—The rebuke for the interlarding of French and Latin words and phrases in your conversation was merited. Either use your mother tongue, or keep your tongue still.

A. C. S.—This correspondent shipped several thousand dollars' worth of goods for San Francisco. In passing round Cape Horn the vessel encountered a terrible storm, during which the captain threw overboard a large portion of his cargo, including nearly the whole of A. C. S.'s goods, in order to save the ship from being lost. The goods were insured, but the company refuse to pay the insurance, because they were thus thrown overboard, and A. C. S. wants to know what he can do about it. That will depend upon the terms of the policy and the *proved* facts of the case. No one can decide such a question upon a more one-sided statement of the matter. You will probably only get at the ultimate decision of the question after a protracted and severe course of litigation.

B. B. B.—The elephant is generally considered a very docile and obedient animal, unless irritated by ill-treatment. The small African elephant may be a more spiteful animal than his larger Asiatic brother; that would account for the discrepancy you mention.

Luta.—It is not probable that your fondness for the poetical works of Edgar A. Poe will "injure" you in any way. Your friends' alarm is quite needless.

Emma.—In passing up or down the aisle of a church—that is, on entering or leaving—a gentleman should precede his lady companions.

Florence.—You will have ample time to decide for the best before the expiration of the two years which "she has agreed to wait."

Josephus.—The word Bible means book; and it is applied to the Scriptures by way of eminence as the Book of books.

J. W., Jr.—The printers are probably hoaxing you. It is not true that the printer's trade is more unhealthy than other in-door occupations.

Reindeer.—This correspondent recently bought a house and lot on which, he understood, there was a mortgage for three thousand dollars. He did not examine the records to see what the real state of the case was, as a friend told him the title was perfectly good, and the seller covenanted that the premises were clear of all liens and incumbrances whatsoever, with the exception of the above-mentioned mortgage. But now the buyer finds that instead of being for three thousand dollars, the mortgage is actually for thirty-eight hundred dollars principal, and that a year's interest is due thereon. This discovery has greatly astonished and alarmed him, as the person of whom he bought has left the country, and he wants to know if he cannot avoid paying the excess of the mortgage over three thousand dollars. No; you will have to pay the entire principal and interest of the mortgage; and must look to the person of whom you purchased the premises for your remedy. If he has property, and if you can get hold of it and him, you can recover back the excess over three thousand dollars, with interest. It is incomprehensible to us how any man of sound mind could buy real estate without having the title properly searched.

A Dejected Lover is a young man of sober, industrious, and every way excellent habits—so he says—who was engaged to be married to a young lady whom he deeply loves. Just before the day agreed upon for the wedding to take place, a couple of friends called upon him, and persuaded him to drink a couple of glasses of liquor, which, as he was totally unaccustomed to such a beverage, intoxicated him, and while in this condition he was seen by a relative of the lady's, who informed her of the fact. The next morning he received a note from her, informing him that she wished him to consider their engagement at an end. He wrote to her, explaining the circumstances of the case, and making all proper apologies and promises; but she continues inexorable. Hence his dejection—his despair. "What shall I do?" he asks. You should go on the even tenor of your way, and by your admirable conduct show the young lady that she has judged you hastily and harshly. This would occasion her to reconsider her decision, if anything would—that is, if you show a proper spirit of manliness and independence, and avoid whining over your disappointment.

Ill-Used.—Your case is not near so hard a one as you imagine it to be. So far as we can judge from your own account of the affair, we think you have no just cause for complaint. You voluntarily stopped in a low drinking-saloon, where no decent man should ever be seen; you voluntarily mingled in the conversation and entered into the disputes of those there assembled; you voluntarily struck a man who called you a liar, for which you got soundly thrashed; you then foolishly sued the man whom you struck, for assault and battery, lost the suit, and had a round sum to pay for costs, and attorney's and counsel's fees; and now you blame the law "for not protecting honest and decent people in their rights." The law only protects those who keep within its limits and obey its precepts. You first violated the law of social order and good citizenship by going into the low haunt you mentioned, and then violated a statute by assaulting a man who had offended you; and under such circumstances you are not entitled to anything either from the law of social sympathy, or the law of the land.

Sufferer.—Your case is truly a terrible one, as unregenerate human nature goes; but a man who is willing to do by his own erring and ruined daughter as he would have his Heavenly Father do by him, would not have much difficulty in deciding upon his course, under such circumstances as you are placed in. Think of your daughter's former goodness and innocence—of the great love you bore her, and which she so ardently returned—of her youth, her ignorance of the wiles of the world, her loving and trusting heart, and above all, of the downward course and awful doom which inevitably await her, unless she is shielded from such a fate, under some protecting roof, and in some pure family circle. You should yield to your wife's entreaties, and receive the erring one back into the asylum of home. A mother's affections and instincts are as near divine as anything human can be, and should be allowed to govern in such cases.

Charity.—A couple were engaged to be married. The gentleman left home for some time, and when he returned, instead of meeting the lady cordially and affectionately as she met him, he treated her with coldness and indifference, "*just to test her love for him.*" The lady, supposing that he no longer cared for her, in a short time accepted the attentions of another lover, and soon after engaged herself to him; whereupon the old lover became alarmed, and said he was "only in fun," etc., etc.; but the lady, it seems, is in downright earnest, and is going to marry her new lover. "Charity" wants to know "if *this is right*," or whether she should not overlook the conduct of her old lover and marry him. We think the young lady did right in discarding the man who so contemptibly attempted to "test her love." None but a little-minded, jealous person would stoop to such unworthy conduct.

Young Husband.—Your household expenses will of course depend upon your taste, habits, pride and vanity. If you and your wife are wise, independent and sensible people, who care more for your own interests and comfort than for the opinions of your acquaintances, you can manage to live very comfortably in New York or Brooklyn on fifteen hundred dollars a year; if you and your wife are vain and foolish, and stand in fear of Mrs. Grundy, you will probably never get a salary big enough to live on comfortably. A servant-girl, including her wages, board, and what she will waste and otherwise dispose of, will cost you on an average $300 a year.

Ferryboat.—You should have apologized to the lady for stepping upon and tearing the skirt of her dress, and then she would, no doubt, have overlooked the matter. It is of course very annoying to a lady to have a valuable dress thus injured; and he who does the injury, though guiltless of intentional offence, should try to extract the sting from the wound by exhibiting a proper degree of politeness and sympathy.

Saladin.—If you are no judge of a horse, you should be careful how you buy a high-priced one. There is nothing, except the choice of a wife, in which a man is so apt to be deceived.

Jessie.—It will probably be difficult, if not impossible, for you to get a publisher. Poems are drugs in the market, and just now publishers are shy of everything.

Absalom.—Your cavilings at and disbelief in the Scriptures are matters for yourself alone. You will have to take the responsibility of your own acts, mental as well as physical.

J. M. R.—We do not care to take the responsibility of deciding upon the honesty or dishonesty of men engaged in regular and honorable business.

Miss L.—Under the circumstances you mention it would not be improper to ask the gentleman for his miniature.

Student of Yale.—You should not be so ambitious to "read everything." You cannot read "everything," or a thousandth part of it. Your object should be to read the best books thoroughly, to study them, to master them to their most hidden depths and loftiest reaches. It is he that reads *well*, and not he that reads *much*, who advances in knowledge. Have you never been astonished at meeting some old farmer, living far retired from the world, who has displayed a depth of knowledge of spiritual things, of human nature, and of the current events of history, which you could not account for? And on going to his house and looking for his library (for of course you supposed he must have read many books to become so learned), were still more astonished to find only the Bible, the Pilgrim's Progress, Watts's Hymns, Shakspeare, Paradise Lost, some standard "History of the World," and the carefully preserved file of a good weekly newspaper. But these works the old farmer has studied for years. He has read them over and over again, and so pondered upon their every idea that they have become a part of himself, have penetrated his inmost soul, ennobled his nature, and illumined his understanding, until from the broad table-land of knowledge to which they have elevated him, he can survey the whole fabric and workings of society with clear and steady vision. That is the way to read.

Augusta.—You will always be bothered with such perplexities in conversation and in writing, until you become familiar with the verbal distinctions in the English language, which are—first, words differently spelled and defined, but pronounced *exactly* alike, as alter, altar; analyst, annalist. Second, words differently spelled and defined, but pronounced nearly alike, as accessary, accessory; chronical, chronicle. Third, words *spelled* alike, but differently pronounced and defined, as abuse, (the ill use of anything,) abuse, (to injure, to ill-treat;) raven, (a fowl,) *rav-en*, (to prey on with voracity.) Fourth, words *spelled and pronounced* alike, but differing widely in signification, as *left*, the opposite of right—*left*, remaining behind; *general*, public, extensive—*general*, one who commands an army. Fifth, words of similar orthography, but of which the part of speech is changed by change of accent, as *absent*, not present—*absent*, to withdraw; *contract*, a bargain—*contract*, to draw together. Sixth, words accented on the same syllable, but whose orthography and pronunciation are changed by a change of the part of speech, as *wife*, a woman that has a husband—*wive*, to take a wife; *cowardice*, want of courage—*cowardize*, to render cowardly and timorous.

Cincinnatian has been visiting a young lady for some six or eight months. Nearly every time he goes to see her she has company, certain young men who are merely acquaintances and friends. He does not enjoy himself in their company, and as they generally stay until he takes his leave, he considers them great bores. When he is alone with the young lady he enjoys himself very much, and he wants to know if it would be improper for him to speak to her about those "bores," and if he should ask her, some time when they were present, to take a walk with him, and she should decline, if such declination would be a sufficient reason for him to discontinue his visits to her? This young man is a fair specimen of a pretty numerous class of selfish beings, who never think of anybody's comfort or wishes save their own. What right have you, Mr. Cincinnatian, to complain to the young lady about her friends? Probably they think *you* are a bore, and with good reason. As for asking the lady, when she has company, to take a walk with you, *that* would expose your ill-breeding, and would probably secure you permission to retire as soon, and stay away as long, as you pleased—and longer, too.

Angeline wishes to know if "she should have *laid* down," and "she ought to *lay* down," are not correct expressions, and if not, she would like to have them corrected for the benefit of herself and others. They are not correct. The verbs lie and lay are amongst the most troublesome in the language to those who have not thoroughly mastered them. The active intransitive verb *to lie* (that is, to extend one's self on a couch, or elsewhere,) has for its past tense, or preterit, *lay*, *lying* for its present participle, and *lain* for its perfect participle. The word *laid* does not come into any of its variations or uses whatever. *Laid* is the preterit of the active *transitive* verb *to lay*, (to place, or throw down). Therefore, "she should have *lain* down," and "she ought to *lie* down," would be the correct form for the above sentences. If the sentence applied to the *laying* down of some article by the person, and not to her own *lying* down, the expression should be, "she should have *laid* it down," or, "she ought to *lay* it down." We say, "the mother *lay* down," and, "the mother *laid* her babe down." By once fixing these distinctions clearly in the mind, you will avoid trouble in the use of these verbs.

Two Young Ladies of Sleepy Hollow say they are both attached to a young man who says he likes each of them equally well, but whose actions show that he does not *love* either of them, and whose visits and attentions they jointly receive and permit. They are not at all jealous of each other, "they love one another so much," but they are jealous of another young lady who is beginning to engross a good deal of the young man's attention. They want to make him love and marry one or the other of them—"they don't care which," &c., &c. What silly girls! You know nothing of love. True love admits of no partnerships, and keeps its own counsel. You had better engage in some useful avocation, and give up matrimonial schemes until your common sense and modesty shall have so far ripened as to cause you to enter upon such matters with becoming delicacy and discretion.

Daniel.—You have no legal rights in the case. The young lady being under twenty-one, is still subject, legally, to her father's control, and if she consents to marry to please him, or through fear of him, you cannot prevent it. Should she become your wife, however, she would then be set free from the control of her father. You had better take the matter quietly, and wait patiently until she becomes of age, and as you have the mother on your side, you need have no fear of the result.

Samuel and Four Others.—You are all mistaken. The proverb, "Necessity has no law," or, "Necessity knows no law," was not originated either by Napoleon or Lord Bacon. It is an old Latin proverb—*durum telum necessitas*, in the original, which, literally translated, means, "Necessity is a keen dart," and the idea being that *necessity* will make its way through anything, or, in other words, knows no law or restraining force.

Webster.—A "shyster" is a villainous attorney-at-law, or a villain that pretends to be an attorney, who intrudes himself upon prisoners arrested on criminal charges, offers them his services, and by false representations swindles them out of as much as he can, and then leaves them to their fate, unless he sees how he can make more by their acquittal. These despicable beings infest only large cities.

John submits the following problem for the solution of the boys who read the Ledger: A and B were driving sheep to market, when A said to B—"Give me three of your sheep, and I will have as many again as you." "No," answered B; "you give me three of your sheep, and then we will each have the same number." How many sheep had A, and how many had B?

Midshipman.—In the Ledger of March 14, 1857, which you can order of any newsdealer, you will find a full account of the manner in which cadets are appointed to the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland, what their requisite qualifications are, and all other necessary information on the subject.

Little Fanny, Louisville.—Your verses are remarkably good for a child of your age, but we have not room for them. You should not try too hard to write poetry, while you are so young. Busy yourself in acquiring valuable information and closely observing nature, and by-and-by the poetry will bubble out of you spontaneously.

Twenty-one.—If the young lady's mother, and the young lady herself, insists upon your either marrying at once, or else ceasing to pay your attentions to the latter, it strikes us that you had better do one thing or the other. *Which* of the two things you will do is, of course, for you to determine.

Chloroform.—If your husband objects to your taking chloroform, and if "you really feel as though you *must* do so, or else be forever afflicted with the toothache," we think he would be an unreasonable and unkind man to continue his objection. Let him accompany you to the dentist's.

Fairy Franklin.—By inquiring of some of the type-founders you can perhaps get track of a book which will give you practical information upon the subject of type-setting and the general business of a printing office or composition room.

Mamma.—It is not a good plan to let young children read fables. They cannot understand them. Fables may instruct men, but we must always speak the naked truth to children, for if it be covered up by metaphor, allegory, or any other vail, they will not take the trouble to search it out.

Louisiana.—You are very unwise, as well as disobedient, in thus disregarding your father's wishes. You should retrace your steps at once, and ask his forgiveness. You are very much mistaken in supposing that the exhibition of disrespect for your parents is an indication of manliness.

Debater.—Yes. If debating societies are properly conducted, they can be made very beneficial to their members. We are pleased to learn that the members of your association appreciate the Ledger so highly.

J.—If you are not able to support a wife, and if your parents would be pained and angered by your marriage, you had better not marry. Wait till your beard and competence come.

Mihl.—If your sweetheart is foolish enough to listen to the nonsensical blandishments of a strolling actor, you may consider yourself fortunate if you are never troubled by her again.

Pardon.—See the Ledger for March 14th, 1857, which can be ordered through any newsdealer, for information about the Military Academy at West Point.

*** *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*